

## THE TIMES GREAT SUMMER OF SPORT

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## Woman MP moves in where even Thatcher could not tread



Lait: breaching the male bastion of Whips' Office

BY JILL SHERMAN AND PHILIP WEBSTER

JACQUI LAIT, MP for Hastings and Rye, broke down one of the remaining male barricades in the Commons yesterday by becoming the first woman to enter the Conservative Whips' Office.

John Major made the eye-catching appointment in a limited reshuffle necessitated by the departure of three ministers from the Government. Although there was a widespread welcome last night for Mrs Lait's promotion, Mr Major alarmed the Tory Right by making changes which it felt failed to

balance the pro-European leanings of Kenneth Clarke and his Treasury team. The Prime Minister's rearrangement of Treasury functions left none of the five ministerial posts in the hands of an influential Eurosceptic. At Mr Clarke's request, the vacancy left by David Heathcoat-Amory, who resigned on Monday over the single currency, was filled by his long-time ministerial aide, Philip Oppenheim.

Rightwingers prospered generally in the limited reshuffle, with an important promotion for David Willetts, regarded as one of the Government's rising stars. The big winner was Mrs Lait.

Margaret Thatcher never succeeded in her ambition to become a whip and Gillian Shephard was also said to covet entry to this male-only preserve.

Mrs Lait, 49, the only female promotion yesterday, becomes the seventh woman in government. Last night she had no qualms about entering an office to which Mrs Thatcher had to be invited as Prime Minister and then only on special occasions.

Mrs Lait insisted that she was well used to dealing with men, having two brothers, a husband and five nephews. "I would like to think I am there on ability," she said.

She said that she had worked in the bar at Strathclyde University and part of her job had been throwing out drunken men. "I have always worked in a male environment. I have never found it a problem and I do not expect to this time," she said.

Mrs Lait married Peter Jones, a company director, in 1974. They have no children. Some time ago she said: "We took a deliberate decision not to have children. We have other things to do."

The other main promotions went to Andrew Mackay, who continued his swift rise through the ranks in the Whips' Office to become Deputy

Chief Whip, Greg Knight, who moves from that post to become Minister of State at the DTI, and John Bowis, who becomes the Transport Minister, moving from the post of Junior Health Minister.

Mr Knight and Mr Bowis replace Tim Eggar and Steve Norris, who are standing down.

In other changes, Simon Burns leaves the Whips' Office to become Health Minister. Liam Fox ends his spell as a whip and becomes a Junior Foreign Office Minister. Peter Ainsworth and Anthony Coombs join the Whips' Office along with Mrs Lait.

Mrs Lait, a pro-European loyal-

ist, entered the Commons in 1992 as MP for Hastings and Rye after a long battle to gain a seat. She has a cheerful, enthusiastic "jolly hockey sticks" approach and has impressed with her loyalist interventions in the Commons, as have the other government newcomers. Her appointment was approved by the entire cast list in the Whips' Office who have a veto over any new entrant.

A former public relations consultant, she ran her own parliamentary consultancy business before becoming an MP.

New faces, page 2  
Leading article, page 17

## EU tries to halt panic on sheep

BY CHARLES BREMNER AND MICHAEL HORNSBY

EUROPEAN officials were trying to smother a "mad sheep" crisis yesterday as livestock markets showed the first signs of panic with a 15 per cent fall in prices.

With ministers insisting that sheep were most unlikely to contract BSE, the Farm Commissioner Franz Fischler came under attack for kindling the latest flare-up in the "mad cow" saga.

Loyola de Palacio, the Spanish Farm Minister, said that Herr Fischler's statement calling for a ban on some sheep and goat offal had achieved the opposite of his intention of reassuring consumers. "This has provoked unjustified and extremely serious fears," she said. And Ivan Yates, the Irish minister, appealed for a sense of proportion. "It is important to learn the lessons of the last six months with BSE. It is quite easy to strike a match and cause a forest fire with regard to BSE. It is more difficult to put it out."

The Commission decided to call for a ban on the use of brain, spinal cord and spleen from goats and sheep after scientists in France and Scotland found that some sheep contracted BSE after being fed infected brain tissue from cattle. But there is no evidence

that sheep on farms had ever been infected.

Brussels is acting partly under pressure from the French Government, whose advisers suspect that BSE is being under-reported and could be affecting a range of animals. France has already banned consumption of brain tissue and has imposed strict rules on the production of animal-based feed.

Now the Commission wants to extend some of the restrictions across the EU, not so much to protect humans as to remove the risk of other animals contracting BSE.

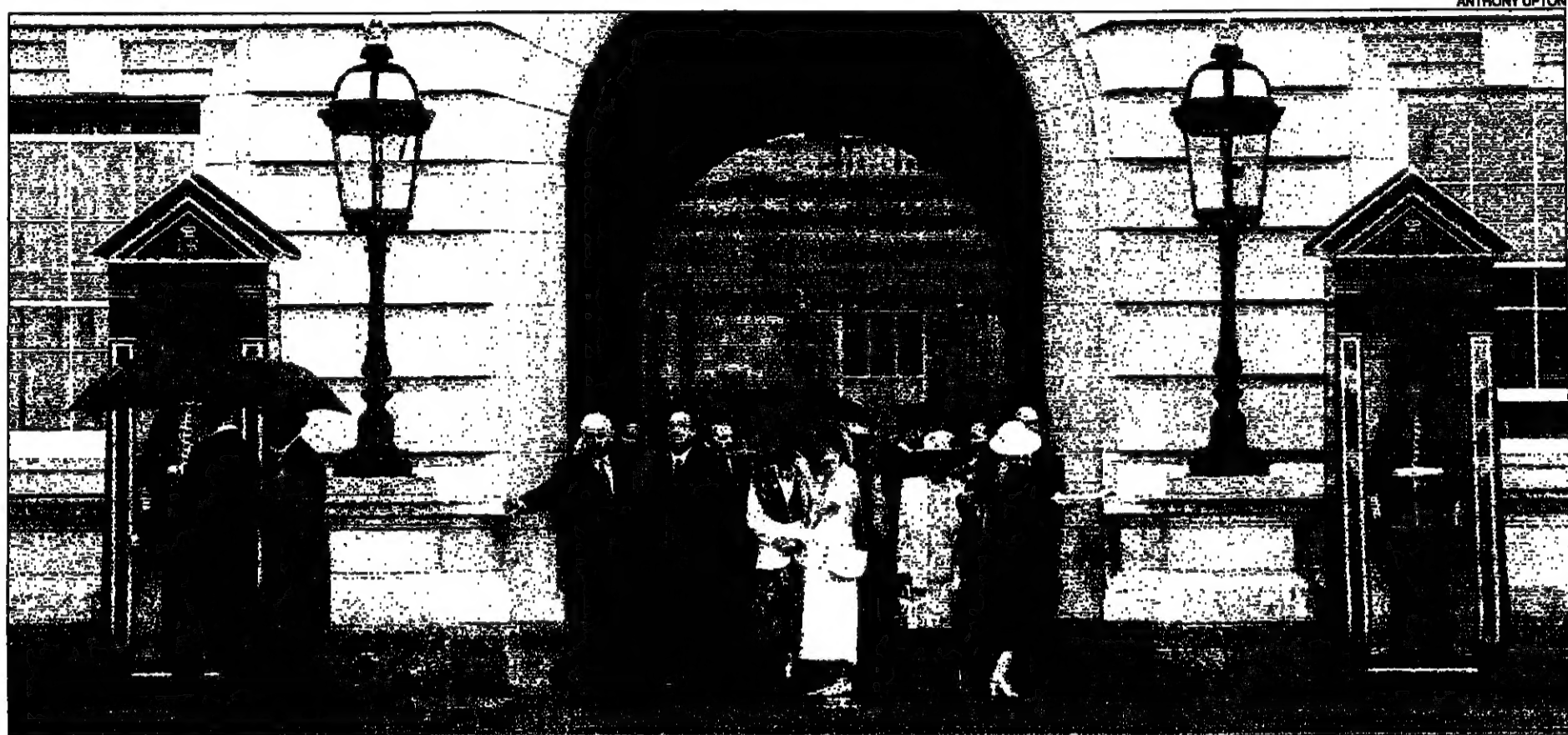
Douglas Hogg, the Agriculture Minister, is expected to tell MPs today that Britain is willing to go along with that and yesterday he said there was no need for a lamb crisis "if people are sensible".

The measures proposed by Herr Fischler would merely exclude from the food chain parts of the animal that were not eaten. "I believe that lamb throughout Europe is wholly safe," he said.

The only cuts likely to be affected by a ban would be saddle of lamb, which includes the backbone, the Barnsley chop, which has a section of spine at its centre, and rosette of lamb from the neck. But even these could continue to be produced as usual, since removal of the spinal cord was likely to be required only if the animal was more than a year old — and most lambs are slaughtered before that age.

Some meat industry and farmers' leaders agreed that the proposed ban prudent, but even so, lamb prices at British markets fell from £1.14 per kg last week to 96p.

Sheep scare, page 8



ANTHONY UPTON

GUESTS at a royal garden party huddle from the storm at Buckingham Palace yesterday after three women were struck by lightning (Adam Freese writes).

Spectacular storms across the South East and Scotland marked the end of the hot dry spell. Scores of people telephoned the emergency services as power supplies to

## Lightning strikes guests at Queen's party

homes were cut. In Buckinghamshire, huge hailstorms were reported.

Fourteen French, Spanish and Italian language students were injured as they played in a park at Richmond Lock, southwest London. One girl

with serious leg injuries was taken to a burns unit.

The women at the garden party, given by The Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh, were taken to St Thomas's Hospital. One woman who sheltered under a plane tree

near a lake suffered burns and is believed to have lost consciousness. She was given first aid by a doctor who was among the guests. Her daughter was treated for shock and another woman was treated for bruising after being

thrown to the ground. Two other women were also treated for shock. The area around the base of the tree was littered with pieces of burnt bark and a large circle of scorched earth surrounded a sapling tree near where the

two women had stood. It is believed one of the women may have opened her umbrella shortly before the lightning struck.

The Queen, who was taking tea 150 yards away in the Royal Tea Tent, was told of the accident but decided not to cancel the party.

Forecast, page 24

## Branson's lottery bribe claims rejected by QC

BY FRANCES GIBB, LEGAL CORRESPONDENT

RICHARD BRANSON'S allegation that he was offered a bribe to pull out of the contest to run the National Lottery was unequivocally dismissed yesterday by the QC who investigated his allegations.

Anne Rafferty concludes that the American businessman Guy Snowden — one of the partners in the successful Camelot consortium — had no reason to regard the Virgin group as a threat, and she doubts that so experienced a businessman would make an improper overture in the way Mr Branson described.

She also points out that contact between the two parties was initiated by Mr

Branson, and she wonders why the Virgin chief took two years to make his concerns public. After a five-month inquiry boycotted by Mr Branson, she concludes: "I am not able to find as a fact that there was any attempt to bribe Mr Richard Branson on September 24."

Ms Rafferty's five-page report has been sent to Peter Davis, the Director General of Oflot who set up the inquiry last December, and it is expected to be published within the next few days.

It makes uncomfortable reading for Mr Branson, who is preparing for a High Court confrontation with Mr Snow-

den later this year. Mr Snowden, chairman of the American company GTEch, is suing the Virgin chief for libel for the original bribery allegation made on the BBC *Panorama* programme last year. And Mr Branson is suing Mr Snowden for accusing him of lying over the claim.

Mr Branson refused to have anything to do with the inquiry on the ground that it was not independent, had a limited remit and was held in private. Ms Rafferty took no oral evidence and reached her conclusions on the basis of written submissions. But the report poses a series of questions

Continued on page 2, col 5



## Assault case row

There was a furious reaction from pressure groups when a case against a policeman accused of grabbing the breasts of two women colleagues was halted. The judge said that the officer should have had a "sound ticking-off". Page 3

## Spies win licence to appeal over sackings

BY MICHAEL EVANS, DEFENCE CORRESPONDENT

SECURITY and intelligence service employees are to be allowed to appeal to industrial tribunals over cases of wrongful dismissal.

The decision was announced yesterday by Malcolm Rifkind, the Foreign Secretary, after an extensive review by a Cabinet Office committee of employment practices in MI6, MI5 and GCHQ, the Government's communications headquarters in Cheltenham.

But the lifting of the blanket ban on access to tribunals will affect only straightforward claims which do not have operational implications, such as sex discrimination.

Mr Rifkind said decisions on whether access to industri-

al tribunals should be allowed would be taken case by case.

A former MI6 officer is currently attempting to sue the intelligence service for wrongful dismissal. However, Mr Rifkind has issued a ministerial certificate banning him from having his case heard by a tribunal.

The certificate was issued because the case allegedly concerned the former officer's competence. An industrial tribunal hearing would have led to discussion of operational matters.

The Foreign Office said that yesterday's announcement had no bearing on his case, which he is expected to take to the European Court of Human Rights.

The Times on the Internet  
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# Consultants seek curb on non-doctors wielding scalpel

By JEREMY LAURANCE  
HEALTH CORRESPONDENT

TIGHTER safeguards on the growing number of non-doctors performing operations and medical procedures were demanded by consultants' leaders yesterday amid fears that risks to patients are rising.

Staff such as nurses and chiropodists are carrying out tasks for which they are not properly trained or supervised, senior doctors said. Patients often do not know they are being treated by a non-doctor and titles such as "specialist practitioner" or "consultant" disguise their true status.

In a report published yesterday,

the Joint Consultants Committee, representing senior doctors in the NHS, says each specialist profession must agree which procedures can be safely delegated to non-doctors and draw up guidelines on training and supervision.

Privately, consultants say patients are suffering at the hands of poorly trained and inadequately supervised staff. Vascular surgeons report having to amputate toes and feet after operations by chiropodists have gone wrong.

Although the operation itself may appear simple, chiropodists have failed to spot warning signs of poor circulation caused by heart disease which dramatically increase the risks of surgery.

Professor Sir Norman Browne, chairman of the committee, said he supported moves to extend the role of nurses and paramedical staff to include minor surgery and other procedures but there was a limit. He described as "unwise" the case last year in which Valerie Tomlinson, a nurse at Treliske hospital in Cornwall, was able to remove a patient's appendix.

"In a third or more cases a person who appears to have appendicitis has something else wrong. It might be a perforated duodenum or a problem with the bowel."

"A nurse may be able to lift up the appendix and snip it off but she may not be able to deal with these other complications. The whole

purpose of a surgeon's training is not solely to enable them to perform a particular procedure more skilfully than a non-medically qualified person but to ensure that they can anticipate and deal with complications and the unexpected. We are concerned to ensure that patient safety is paramount," he said.

However, the recent case of Gillian Erickson, a nurse at Clatterbridge hospital, Wirral who has performed more than 200 minor operations on the hand could be acceptable if the surgery was carried out in accordance with the safeguards, he said.

Sir Norman added that delegating tasks such as these was

probably necessary to meet the growing demand for health care, but it was essential that staff were properly trained and supervised, followed firm protocols and made their status known to the patient, he said.

Sir Rodney Sweetnam, president of the Royal College of Surgeons, said no other country in Europe allowed surgery to be undertaken by non-medically qualified staff and that in Britain animals enjoyed greater protection than humans.

"Animals are protected from operations on their bodies by anyone other than a fully trained veterinary surgeon. I am sorry to say that patients in this country do

not have the same protection." He denied that surgeons were trying to protect their jobs and said nurses trained to assist cardiac surgeons or to perform minor operations were perfectly acceptable. "It helps a hard-pressed workforce."

However, he said that groups were taking up the scalpel without nationally agreed training programmes or certification and that rules should be laid down by Parliament. "There is a developing jungle out there and the time has come for the public to say whether they want only surgeons to operate on them."

The UK Central Council on Nursing criticised the consultants for failing to include nurses in

producing their document which they dubbed a "missed opportunity".

The Society of Chiropodists said 10,000 foot operations were performed by its members last year and a similar number of surgical procedures on nails.

In a statement, the society rejected the idea of tasks being "delegated" to chiropodists but said they were prepared to work with doctors.

The statement added: "We reject any implication being given to the public that they are in any danger from surgical treatment performed by appropriately trained and examined, state-registered chiropodists and podiatrists."

## Winning cards in Prime Minister's reshuffled pack



PHILLIP OPPENHEIM, the Junior Minister at Trade and Industry, will be picking up David Heathcoat-Amory's red boxes and chauffeur-driven car every night. He has collected the new title of Exchequer Secretary to the Treasury. In the run-up to the election, the job is unlikely to be taxing, but Mr Oppenheim will be mollified by working for his hero, Kenneth Clarke, who shares his enjoyment of beer and curries. The Chancellor specifically asked for Mr Oppenheim, who will toe his line on Europe. Better known for his exploits with Page Three girls, chronicled in the tabloid press, he also has a mastery command of technical detail. He surprised everyone by winning Amber Valley in 1983 at the age of 27 and was immediately marked out as a Tory Wunderkind. But the blue-chip, well-connected MP has irritated many in his party with his laddish behaviour and his refusal, even at 40, to grow up. He calls his dog Vomit and has just finished writing a "bonkbuster" novel. He won the title of most romantic MP of the year.



DAVID WILLETTTS, the Prime Minister's guru and Public Service Minister, got the greatest reward from the reshuffle. Until now few voters had heard of Mr Willetts. Nicknamed the thinker among the drinkers, he has always been a backroom boy. He was an adviser to Margaret Thatcher, private secretary to Nigel Lawson and director of the Centre for Policy Studies, the Tory think-tank, before becoming MP for Havant, Hampshire, at 33. As a backbencher and junior minister he has been at the heart of Tory strategy. After an unhappy spell in the whips office, he has thrived as a junior minister in the Cabinet Office. Brought up in a semi-detached home in Moseley, Birmingham, and educated at a direct-grant school and Oxford, he has friends on both sides of the party. Some colleagues have criticised the donnish 40-year-old for being pompous, unworried and ambitious. Friends say he is a practical, political intellect who dreams of becoming Chancellor of the Exchequer.



ANDREW MACKAY'S elevation to Deputy Chief Whip is the latest in a string of promotions for the former estate agent. Now the most experienced whip in John Major's team, he is a silver-tongued charmer intent on snuffing out backbench rebellion at the outset. The unflappable rightwinger has been admired for his guile in helping the Government to survive endless threatened revolts. Most recently as pairing whip he has spun a web of persuasion to encourage Tory MPs to protect a dwindling majority. Even MPs forced to break social engagements to bail out the Government speak highly of his tactics. He rose still higher in their estimation with a persuasive case to the Senior Salaries Review Body, which recommended a 26 per cent rise. He has become the archetypal senior whip, gliding through the tearooms and bars, ears attuned to the faintest signal of rebellion, eyes peeled for suspicious-looking cliques. His year-round tan — reinforced by perpetual foreign travel and a congested golfing diary — is a talking point of the lobbies.



JOHN BOWIS, the new junior Transport Minister, could hardly be in starker physical contrast to Sir George Young, the Transport Secretary, who is the tallest MP in the Commons. Known as "Bulky" to political friends, Mr Bowis, 50, is a stalwart of the Commons tug-of-war team and a curvy addict. Political opponents have dubbed the duo the Laurel and Hardy of Whitehall. Elected MP for Battersea in 1987, he replaced the former Labour minister Alf Dubs and was quickly marked out for promotion. He was made a parliamentary private secretary to David Hunt by Margaret Thatcher in 1989. He has been a Junior Health Minister since 1993, earning a reputation for being solid and reliable and performing well in the Commons. Gregarious and outgoing, he was a star of the *Blue Review*, a former feature of Tory party conferences, being described as "a gifted comic actor" by a theatre critic. Educated at Tonbridge School and Brasenose College, Oxford, he is married with three children.



GREG KNIGHT'S departure from the Government whips' office will be a relief to Tory MPs of the rebellious tendency. Mr Knight, 47, the new Minister of State at the Department of Trade and Industry, is the author of a book of parliamentary insults. He learnt most of them in his period as Deputy Chief Whip where he was one of the most feared men in the Government. He is a quick learner. When he entered the Commons in 1983 he had impressed Margaret Thatcher as the creator of prescient campaign song. *Maggie will always be around*. The admiration dimmed when she met him and found he sported a beard. A former drummer in a pop group, he once used the amplifiers from a recording studio he ran to drown out a political opponent's speech. An avowed animal rights campaigner, he owned two Brazilian squirrel monkeys until 1988. He is best known as a collector of classic cars, and is believed to have been a key influence in persuading the Chancellor to introduce tax concessions for cars more than 25 years old.

## Openness pledge on defence sales

The Government promised yesterday to be more open about Britain's overseas defence sales after criticism in Sir Richard Scott's report into the arms-for-Iraq affair (Michael Evans writes). Sir Richard urged the Ministry of Defence to review the longstanding policy under which successive governments have refused to answer questions in Parliament about defence equipment exports.

Yesterday James Arbuthnot, the Defence Procurement Minister, said that the convention would be scrapped and questions would be answered "to the fullest extent possible". But, he attached conditions that made clear there was no dramatic policy shift, saying full details would be given provided they did not jeopardise "national security, the legitimate security concerns of importers, or British relations with other countries".

David Clark, Opposition spokesman on defence, called on Michael Portillo, the Defence Secretary, to make a Commons statement today about three RAF equipment contracts worth about £3.5 billion.

## Talks on loyalist march

Sir Patrick Mayhew, the Northern Ireland Secretary, held talks with leaders of the loyalist Apprentice Boys as fears increased that their annual parade in Londonderry next month could cause trouble. The local MP, John Hume, leader of the Social Democratic and Labour Party, is also to have talks with the Apprentice Boys. Republicans are intent on having the parade, on August 10, routed away from the city walls overlooking the nationalist Bogside.

## Job qualification alert

Job-related qualifications taken by more than a million people could never be successful in their present form and should be scrapped, a leading government education adviser said in a report yesterday (David Charter writes). John Marks, a member of the School Curriculum and Assessment Authority, said that National Vocational Qualifications had failed because they still lacked rigorous standards eight years after their launch.

## Driving 'reform school'

An experimental road safety scheme giving dangerous drivers the chance to escape punishment by attending tough rehabilitation sessions in the classroom could be extended throughout the country. Transport Ministers are monitoring a project run by Devon council, which has resulted in dramatic improvements in driving standards. Drivers caught speeding or driving carelessly in Devon can opt for the course rather than go to court.

## Wallace appeal begins

Colin Wallace, a former Army information officer, began an appeal against a conviction for manslaughter, 15 years after being jailed for killing an antiques dealer. Mr Wallace, freed in 1986, has claimed he was the victim of a "dirty tricks" campaign after speaking about an alleged right-wing plot to discredit certain politicians. Michael Mansfield, QC, cited fresh medical opinion, saying the case against Mr Wallace was "fundamentally flawed".

## Woman beaten to death

A woman has been found beaten to death in her bed at Newquay, Cornwall. Kathryn Sharples, 43, who was divorced, was found lying face down in the ground-floor bathroom. She had been struck several times on the back of the head with a blunt instrument. There was no sign of a struggle or sexual assault and detectives believe that she may have known her killer. She was last seen alive at 10.30pm on Sunday.

## Sun-proof road tested

Government scientists are testing a sun-resistant road surface capable of withstanding the hottest British summers. They hope that the improved "bituminous mastic" designed to stay solid at temperatures of up to 65°C (145°F), will consign the embarrassing melting of motorways to history. In very hot weather, molten tar tends to bubble to the surface. Cars leave deep ruts in the softened road costing millions of pounds to repair.

## More red kites released

The reintroduction of the red kite to England 100 years after it all but disappeared continued yesterday as the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds released 16 into the wild at a secret location in the middle of the country. Last year 11 of the birds of prey were released in the Midlands, and of these nine have survived. One was poisoned — a reminder of the way the birds were persecuted in the last century.

## 'Sex tourism' legislation

British paedophiles who abuse children abroad will face prosecution in the United Kingdom under proposed legislation announced by the Home Secretary. The move comes amid concern over paedophiles who travel to countries such as Thailand and the Philippines for sex with child prostitutes. Michael Howard also announced plans to extend court powers to try foreign extremists resident in Britain who plan or incite crimes abroad.

## Ice Age elephant find

An Ice Age elephant has been unearthed in Cambridgeshire by an amateur geologist. The remains of the animal, which is between 110,000 and 120,000 years old, was found in a gravel pit near Peterborough close to a spot where other archaeologists are working on a Bronze Age site. The prehistoric find, of a straight-tusked elephant or *Palaeoloxodon antiquus*, has been made by Pauline Dawn, an editorial assistant from Stamford, Lincolnshire.

### THE APPOINTMENTS

The new posts in John Major's government reshuffle

Greg Knight	Minister of State, Department of Trade and Industry
David Willetts	Paymaster General, Office of Public Service
John Bowis	Undersecretary of State, Department of Transport
Phillip Oppenheim	Exchequer Secretary to the Treasury
Liam Fox	Undersecretary of State, Foreign and Commonwealth Office
Simon Burns	Undersecretary of State, Department of Health
Andrew Mackay	Treasurer of Her Majesty's Household (Deputy Chief Whip)
Derek Conway	Vice-Chamberlain of Her Majesty's Household
Patrick McLoughlin	Lord Commissioner of Her Majesty's Treasury
Roger Knapman	Lord Commissioner of Her Majesty's Treasury
Richard Ottaway	Lord Commissioner of Her Majesty's Treasury
Anthony Coombs	Treasury Assistant Government Whip
Jacqui Laik	Assistant Government Whip
Peter Ainsworth	Assistant Government Whip

## Branson claims

Continued from page 1

which Mr Branson would have been required to answer had he co-operated.

First, she asks whether the words reportedly used by Mr Snowden at a lunch party inevitably suggested a bribe. Mr Snowden is alleged to have said: "Well, I don't know how to phrase this, Richard. There is always a bottom line. I'll get to the point. In what way can I help you Richard? I'm sure everybody needs something."

Mr Branson took this to be a bribe to withdraw his bid to run the lottery.

Second, the report questions whether the bribe attempt would have been made by Mr Snowden who was alone at the meeting, while Mr Branson was at all times accompanied by an aide or colleague. It asks: "How likely is it that an experienced businessman would make such an attempt when unaccompanied, whilst the object of his attempt clearly had an ally with him?"

Thirdly, the report asks why it took Mr Branson so long to come forward with the allegations. "Why did it take two years for a concerned Mr Branson, disappointed as I conceive him to be by his claimed failure to interest the Director-General (of Oflot) in the allegation, to air his anxieties publicly?"

Ms Rafferty writes: "I have heard nothing by way of explanation for the queries that I list above, and am therefore in a position to do no more than highlight them as instances of questions to which I would have appreciated answers."

She then goes on to make four points in concluding that there was no reason for a bribe. There was no hint that the Camelot consortium felt Mr Branson to be a threat: the initial contact between the two parties came from Mr Branson, not from G Tech; the Camelot consortium had devoted years to developing its bid; and Mr Snowden's more realistic view of the "financial realities" of lottery management seemed to have prevailed.

According to Mr Snowden, who submitted written evidence to the inquiry, the lunch meeting between the two men was "an awkward occasion" by Mr Branson's inability or refusal to grasp the realities of the Camelot Consortium's advanced state of readiness and "carefully planned back-up".

Mr Snowden also believed that Mr Branson showed a lack of awareness that "the giving of a high percentage of profits to the inquiry, the lunch meeting between the two men was 'an awkward occasion' by Mr Branson's inability or refusal to grasp the realities of the Camelot Consortium's advanced state of readiness and 'carefully planned back-up'".

The report adds: "At no stage, he avers, was he made anxious that what he saw as Camelot's prime position in contention for the lottery licence was threatened."

Last night Mr Branson's office said that he was abroad. His lawyers, Harbottle & Lewis, said that they would issue a statement when the report was published. Earlier this year, a Virgin spokesman said that the issue would be properly investigated in the High Court libel action.

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Officer accused of grabbing women constables 'should have had just a sound ticking-off'

## Outcry as judge halts police sex assault case

BY KATE ALDERSON AND JOANNA BAILE

THE case against a policeman accused of grabbing the breasts of two female constables was halted yesterday by a judge who said that the officers should have had a "sound ticking-off" instead.

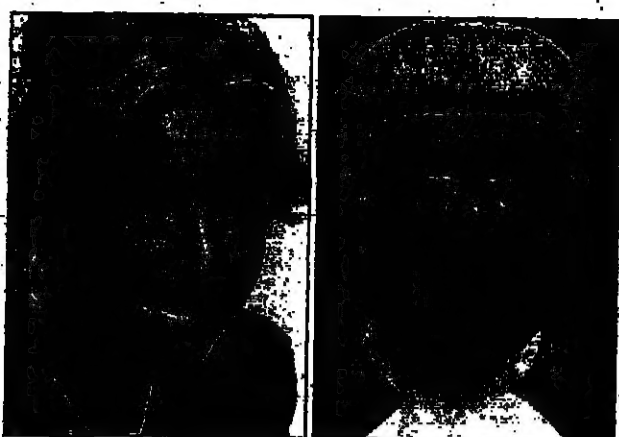
There was a furious reaction from pressure groups and MPs after Judge McCallum directed the jury to find PC Robert Bridle, 41, not guilty of three charges of indecent assault. The group Justice for Women urged him to resign.

The judge said that PC Bridle's actions had stemmed from the sort of behaviour "that people are liable to indulge in when there is a lot of tension around". A verdict of not guilty was also returned on another indecent assault charge, due to be heard at a separate hearing.

Lynne Tolan, the former detective chief inspector who investigated the case, condemned the judge's comments as "biased, crass, prejudicial and outdated". After the hearing at Bradford Crown Court, she said: "The message could rightly be concluded as, 'Join Britain's modern police service, girls — and get your tits groped.'"

West Yorkshire Police said they would be "robustly pursuing" further action against PC Bridle, who has been suspended for nearly two years.

Judge McCallum was told



Lynne Tolan, the police investigator, said that Judge McCallum's comments were crass and biased

during the opening day of the case on Monday that horse-play and sexual banter were common at the Halifax station where the officers were based.

PC Bridle, of Cleckheaton, Yorkshire, who is married, had denied the four charges. The first incident was alleged to have occurred in September 1994 after another male officer made a joke about a WPC having bigger breasts than a colleague. The WPC, who cannot be named, said that PC Bridle had said something like "let's see, then".

She told the court: "He came up behind me. I put my head forward and my hands over me — I was protecting myself. He put his hands underneath my hands and held on to my breasts." John Cooper, for the

prosecution, said PC Bridle was alleged to have indecently assaulted another policewoman the following month by sitting astride her with his penis on her. She believed he was trying to kiss her. On another occasion he put his hand between the officer's jumper and shirt and rested it on her right breast. She made a complaint the next day.

PC Bridle told investigators that he had never touched the first WPC. He did not find her physically attractive because she looked like "a bulldog chewing a wasp".

He admitted massaging the second officer's neck and may have sat astride her in a "joke sort of way", but said there was no sexual connotation. The allegation that he put his

hand up her jumper was a "total and utter lie".

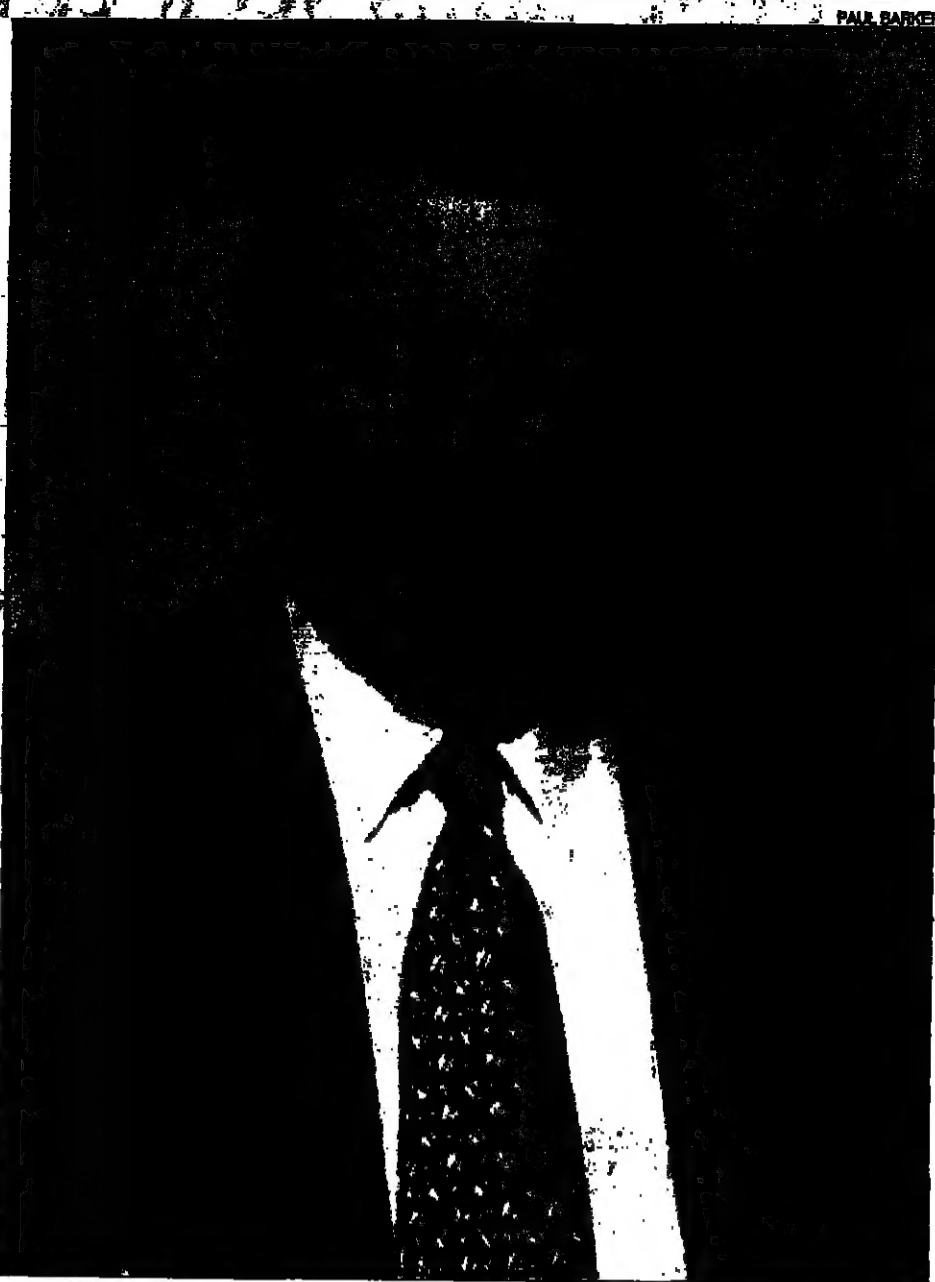
Robert Smith, QC, for the defence, said that, after his long suspension, PC Bridle was "a very nervous man".

The judge said that although the women had complained, they had wasted the case to be heard with by senior officers' rather than at court. After reading the jury's verdict on Monday afternoon, he said: "The message could rightly be concluded as, 'Join Britain's modern police service, girls — and get your tits groped.'"

The judge directed the jury to deliver not guilty verdicts after the prosecution offered no further evidence yesterday morning.

Ruth Hall, of Women Against Rape, said: "If the police are allowed to get away with sex assaults on their own colleagues, no woman is safe. The judge should be sacked."

Alice Mahon, Labour MP for Halifax, said: "Many women will be shocked at this. We expect our judges to take that kind of behaviour a little more seriously. I am absolutely disgusted."



PC Robert Bridle, 41, has been suspended from the force for nearly two years

## Hunt for mother of boy found in bush

BY JOANNA BAILE

POLICE are trying to trace the mother of a three-year-old boy who was found asleep under a bush in Bourne mouth after apparently being abandoned.

The boy, who may be called Steven, was found by a passer-by at 7pm on Monday in the grounds of a community centre at Pelham Park, Kinson.

Dorset police said yesterday: "He has been in contact with police there, but no child has been reported missing." Foster parents are caring for the boy.

## Brittany murder victim had been stalked for days

FROM BILL FROST IN PLEINE FOUGÈRES

THE tramp accused of raping and murdering 13-year-old Caroline Dickinson at a youth hostel in Brittany had stalked her school party from the day they arrived in France.

Last night police sources named the killer as Patrice Pade, a vagrant in his early 40s. He has a conviction for rape and a history of other violent sexual offences.

Gerard Zaig, the examining magistrate in charge of the case, said that, once the party from Launceston College in Cornwall had been targeted by Pade, the murder was inevitable. "From the moment this man saw his prey, nothing could stop him."

Caroline's four room-mates woke last Thursday at the hostel in Pleine Fougères to find her body, face down on her mattress. She had been raped and suffocated. M Zaig said that her friends had heard nothing during the night because Pade had clamped his hand over her mouth. He added that her room-mates had also told police that they were particularly tired that evening. "They were sound asleep; it had been an exhausting day."

Pade arrived in the town, 40 miles east of St Malo, 48 hours before the party from Launceston. He watched the hostel for four days before he struck. Under French fire safety laws, the building must remain unlocked at night. Pade apparently had little difficulty slipping past the night watch-

woman and entering the first-floor bedroom where Caroline lay asleep.

Pade had been noticed by children in Pleine Fougères soon after his arrival. Once Caroline's body was found they gave detectives a detailed description of the tramp, which was circulated across France.

He was arrested in Sourdeval, 35 miles east of Pleine Fougères, on Saturday afternoon after a policeman saw him walking on a road south of the town. Detectives investigating Caroline's murder arrived half an hour later and Pade confessed to his crime soon afterwards.

"We got him very quickly after being told that he was heavily tattooed and wearing an earring," M Zaig said. "He had been seen sleeping rough around Pleine Fougères."

Pade was transferred yesterday from his cell in St Malo to a high-security jail that police would not name. Earlier he underwent further questioning and formally admitted his crimes.

His trial may be several months off, M Zaig indicated last night. Police sources said that, given his previous convictions for sexual offences, "a life sentence in his case will really mean life".

In Pleine Fougères, Lionel Morin, owner of the Hotel des Voyageurs, said: "We hope this man's arrest and admission of guilt will be of some relief to Caroline's poor family."

## Clubs told to end free drink ads for women

BY CAROL MIDDLETON

NIGHTCLUBS that offer free admission and drinks to women are breaking the law, the Equal Opportunities Commission said yesterday.

Three clubs in Stoke-on-Trent have been told to abandon their advertising campaigns promoting a complimentary glass of champagne and "free admission to all ladies". The Radio Authority ordered their removal after consulting the commission.

"We did receive complaints about three adverts. As a matter of course we consult the Equal Opportunities Commission in such matters and it told us the ads discriminated against men. The offers have to apply to men as well, we were told."

Becky Nathan, assistant manager of the Europa, one of the clubs that ran the advertisements, said: "We never had any complaints. We wanted to balance out the sexes as well as attract more couples, so it seemed a natural thing to do. We are very upset to be told we cannot do it. But we will carry on offering free admission or free drinks to avoid having too many men here — we simply won't advertise it."

"No men complained. After all, it attracted more women, so why should they? And for couples it meant one of them got in for nothing."

Media, page 22

## Barclays bomber threatens to hit Sainsbury's stores

BY RICHARD FORD, HOME CORRESPONDENT

A BOMBER who has waged a campaign against Barclays Bank has threatened to plant explosive devices at Sainsbury's supermarkets in an attempt to extort "a considerable amount of money". Scotland Yard said yesterday.

Shoppers and staff at the company's 363 branches are being warned to be on their guard against bullet bombs among goods on the shelves or in car parks.

The supermarket chain, used by 8.7 million shoppers a week, has increased security at its stores, which were already patrolled at night by security guards and employ closed circuit television cameras inside and out.

The extortionist, the self-styled Mardi Gra bomber, ended the range of his 19-month campaign in a letter to Sainsbury's director at the head office in south London on July 10.

In the letter, the bomber demanded a "considerable amount of money" and threat-



Bombs are made up of bullets in boxes or books

ened to post explosive devices to supermarkets, or place them there if the cash was not paid. There was no bomb with the letter.

Sainsbury's immediately contacted the Metropolitan Police, who made the unusual decision to attempt blackmail cases to release details to the public in an attempt to catch the extortionist.

Detective Superintendent John Beadle, who is leading the hunt, said he was convinced that the letter had come

from the same person responsible for 25 attacks on Barclays banks or officials that began in December 1994. He declined to disclose how much cash the man had demanded.

Mr Beadle told a press conference at Scotland Yard that police believed that the blackmailer was a person, rather than an organisation, living in London or the South East. "We think it is likely it is somebody who is some sort of obsessive and has the time and ability to construct these devices."

He said the "bullet bombs", consisting of shotgun cartridges and bullets fitted into video boxes and books, and designed to explode when opened, had been made with great care.

Last night Dino Adriano, deputy chief executive of Sainsbury's supermarkets, said that the police advice was that the risk was low. He added: "We are naturally taking a number of extra security measures."

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# Kathy Botham says sex and drug claims made her life hell

BY TIM JONES

HER voice straining with emotion, Kathy Botham yesterday told a High Court jury of the "hell" she had endured as old allegations of sex, drugs and adultery against her husband had resurfaced.

Giving evidence in Ian Botham's libel action against Imran Khan, the former Pakistani cricket captain, Mrs Botham told the jury that she had no idea why the issues had been raised.

Asked by Charles Gray, QC, for Botham and Allan Lamb, whether she had enjoyed the case so far, she said: "No. I have found it quite traumatic." She said it took her back to the 1980s when, for five or six years, their marriage was in the spotlight.

"I didn't find it at all pleasant then. In fact, it was hell to live with. I think I went through hell last week as well, especially when I opened the papers the next day."

Mrs Botham said that she

was proud of what her husband of 20 years had achieved during his playing career. Botham, she said, had been "fuming" when he read articles suggesting that he cheated at cricket and was a racist.

Lamb's wife, Lindsay, told the court that Lamb had written an article about alleged ball-tampering by the Pakistani team because he wanted the truth to come out. Trembling and tearful, she hit the side of the witness box and said: "Lambie was not motivated by racism or anything like that. Can you imagine how I felt when my six-year-old daughter came home from school and asked 'Mummy, why doesn't Daddy like black people?'"

Referring to an earlier libel action in which her husband was involved, Mrs Lamb said: "I had four days of that and this is another seven days. I have been listening to balls."

David Guwer, the former England captain, said that he

had never considered Botham a racist. He said video footage of Botham during the 1982 Test against Pakistan appeared to show him pushing the ball back into shape with his thumbs, which Guwer considered to be legal.

George Carman, QC, opening the case for Imran, said that attempts by his client to offer an olive branch to the two men had been rejected because they had their knives out for him.

It was, Mr Carman told the jury, "a thousand pities that these great warriors of sport could not make their peace and shake hands". But, he said, it was not to be. "I invite you to consider who offered the hand of friendship and who shunned it."

Imran, he said, had offered a golden opportunity of settling the issue by writing a letter to *The Times* making clear that he had never called the plaintiffs racist or accused Botham of cheating. The letter



Ian Botham with his wife Kathy, who said yesterday that the case has upset her

would have said that he had been seriously misquoted in an interview he had given to the magazine *India Today*. "Unhappily his attempts at reconciliation failed."

Mr Carman told the jury that he had engaged in so-called "muckraking" about Botham's past to show that he had lied publicly when he had denied taking drugs.

Botham and Lamb claim

that the *India Today* article called them racist, uneducated and lacking in class and upbringing. Botham is also suing over a story in *The Sun* which he says accused him of ball-tampering. Imran, who denies libel, says his words were taken out of context.

Michael Atherton, the England captain, will miss net practice at Lord's today when the rest of the team prepares

for the Test against Pakistan, starting tomorrow.

After attending an early morning engagement at 10 Downing Street, where the Prime Minister will announce government sporting initiatives, Atherton will go to the High Court to give evidence before joining his colleagues. The hearing continues.

Cricket, pages 46, 48

## Protesters save Joyce home from demolition

BY AUDREY MAGEE

PROTESTS from James Joyce scholars around the world have saved a house in Dublin that was a childhood home of the author.

No 2 Millbourne Avenue, which stands in a large garden in Drumcondra, a northern suburb, was to have been knocked down to make way for flats. After objections from local residents and James Joyce societies, the developers have agreed to spare the building.

Joyce lived there between the ages of 10 and 12, and refers to it in the autobiographical novel *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*. The Joyce family originally lived in Bray, about 12 miles south of Dublin, but moved to Drumcondra when they fell into debt. Joyce's mother had 12 children and the youngest, Freddie, was born in the rambling home. They moved again many times.

The building has suffered vandalism since plans to demolish it were first lodged 12 months ago.

SATURDAY  
IN THE TIMESSOMETHING  
WILD

A fashion safari through summer's coolest looks, in the *Magazine*

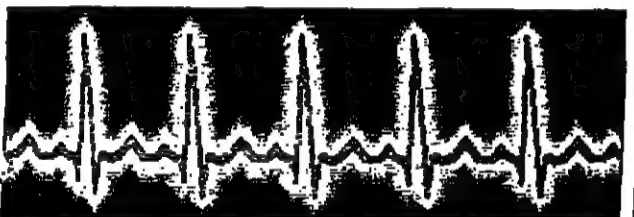
PLUS

Weekend, Car 96, Weekend Money, 1015 for young Times readers and *Vision*, the 7-day guide to TV and radio

THE SEVEN-SECTION TIMES IS 40p ON SATURDAY



In bar 14 of the opening scene of Act II of *Fidelio*, far right, fourth line down, the timpani seem to evoke an irregular heartbeat, Dr Cooper says



## Beethoven 'set his bad heart to music'

BY NICK NUTTALL

SOME of Beethoven's greatest music, including the *Eroica* symphony, might have been inspired by a hitherto unknown heart condition brought on by heavy drinking, a cardiologist claims.

Professor Berndt Luderitz, who has studied passages of the composer's music, believes the sound of Beethoven's irregularly beating heart became an important influence, heightened by his deafness. Beethoven (1770-1827) began to lose his hearing in the late 1790s and by 1819 could converse only through a notebook.

Medical researchers who have been studying the composer's autopsy reports have concluded that Beethoven died from kidney failure complicated by liver damage from excessive drinking.

Professor Luderitz, of Bonn University, thinks Beethoven, who wrote striking and varied rhythms, also had a heart condition that he drew on when composing. "We know he was a drinker with a big consumption of punch and wine, and alcohol produces ventricular arrhythmias. Because of his deafness, he perceived his cardiac disorders more intensely and set these cardiac rhythm disturbances to music," he cites Beethoven's piano sonata Opus 81a, *Les Adieux*, whose offbeats might have echoed the heart condition that the composer might have had.

The findings were given credence yesterday by the music historian H.C. Robbins Landon, a leading authority on Beethoven. "It is speculation, but I think this is quite possible. When you are deaf, your heart is one thing you will listen to," he said that *Les Adieux*, written in 1809 for a prince who left Vienna while it was bombarded by the French, was "always stopping and starting. This is a very curious piece; indeed, it might have been the first sign that Beethoven knew something was wrong with him."

Mr Robbins Landon said Beethoven had an array of rhythmic styles. "This is especially the case in the *Eroica* [the Third Symphony] in 1804.



Beethoven: he used offbeat rhythms

You get these odd, offbeat, hammer strokes. If you were running up a hill with a heart problem, this is the kind of thing you might be listening to in your mind's eye."

Beethoven's rhythms became more complex later in his composing life, something that might reflect a worsening heart condition. The heartbeat has always been part of music. Before the invention of the metronome, composers used their pulse-rates to check tempi.

Dr Barry Cooper, a musicologist at Manchester University and author of *Beethoven: The Creative Process*, said Beethoven had used the human heartbeat in his *Symphonic Fantastique*. In Stravinsky's *The Rite of Spring*, the tension is heightened by an insistent rhythm that suggests a disordered heartbeat.

Dr Cooper said it was clear that the heart was also important to Beethoven, and cited "heart-like rhythms" in the *Adagio* of his only opera, *Fidelio*, before Florestan's great aria. The tempo of some of his songs is 70 beats a minute, the thud of a resting heart.

But Dr Cooper is sceptical about whether Beethoven's music echoes a sick heart or is dominated by heart-related beats. "The heartbeat is a fairly straightforward rhythm so composers will use it even if they are not trying to represent the heart. They might occasionally want to use the beat of the heart because the text refers to the human heart."

# Would you have forgotten so quickly if she was your child?

We all saw the images of the Rwandan war in our newspapers and on our television screens: traumatised toddlers, children dazed by the killing they had seen, bewildered at finding themselves alone. We wondered whether we'd ever be able to sleep at night; if we'd ever stop thinking, 'What if that was my child?' One year on, most of us have forgotten. One year on, Bibia's war is not over.

When Bibia was flung onto a truck full of panicking people last year, she screamed for her mum. Having been driven away from the terror and slaughter of the Kibeho Refugee Camp, she realised her mother wasn't there. At five years old she was alone in the middle of a war.

It costs an average £90 to reunite a child like Bibia with her family. If just three readers give £30 each we could bring a family back together.

Through its tracing programme, British charity Children's Aid Direct has discovered that Bibia's mother did make it out of Kibeho alive. But her home region is now a

place of heavy military activity, and it is unlikely that her mother has been able to return there.

"We need to extend our search," says David Grubb, Executive Director of Children's Aid Direct, "but we need money to do this. Will someone out there help us put Bibia back into the arms of the person she loves most in the world - her mother?"

### Who is still there for the children?

The cameras have moved on, but many of those children for whom we wept are still there. And so, thank goodness, is the centre for unaccompanied children in Butare. The centre was set up overnight by Children's Aid Direct (formerly Feed

the Children (Europe)) in the wake of the Kibeho Refugee Camp massacre.

This week the centre is preparing to take in more children who are being forced back over the border from refugee camps in Burundi.

The centre is there to provide children with food, treatment for their wounds, protection and the chance of some basic education.

Many of the children are under five. The centre's housemothers give love and attention, but each child needs someone of

their own to care for them. Children's Aid Direct has now reunited 665 Rwandan children with the people they love. They are still looking for the families of hundreds more children.

### Children in the aftermath of war

When Children's Aid Direct was first established (six years ago) as Feed the Children (Europe) it brought humanitarian aid to children in emergencies.

The aid it provides has now evolved to also answer the needs of children in the aftermath of war - getting schools and health care

going again, training local people to provide children with the support they need to overcome their trauma.

In doing so, the charity is also rekindling the hope of parents, giving them a reason to go on, to rebuild their homes and communities. To reflect this new emphasis, Feed the Children (Europe) has changed its name to Children's Aid Direct.

### Are you still there?

Children's Aid Direct's message is clear. "Children in the aftermath of war still need your compassion," says David Grubb. "That doesn't mean saying, 'how sad', 'poor kid'. It means seeing a child's anguish, and doing something. Forgive us if we sound blunt - but it is just too important to beat about the bush. Please, help if you can, today."

To make your donation call Children's Aid Direct on

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Michael Forsyth wants more emphasis on Scottish successes such as Adam Smith and Robert the Bruce, rather than the heroic failures William Wallace, Mary Queen of Scots and Ally MacLeod's 1978 World Cup football team

## Schools urged to shift focus from losers to great Scots

By Shirley English

SCOTTISH history lessons dwell too much on heroic failures and gloss over the nation's great achievements, a government-backed report claims.

Schoolchildren are being taught a distorted version of their country's past which concentrates on defeated romantic figures, such as William Wallace and the Jacobites.

As a result many pupils leave school with a negative view of Scottish history, largely ignorant of the rich legacy of thinkers and inventors of the past 300 years. The

interim report by the Scottish Consultative Council on the Curriculum — which advises schools — raises concerns that some children have only a limited understanding of key events. The authors believe part of the problem is that not enough teachers have studied Scottish history, which was viewed as a "second class" subject up until the 1980s.

The view of history as a series of heroic defeats is one that the Scottish Secretary, Michael Forsyth, highlighted in April when he criticised the preoccupation with "loser" William Wallace over the

more successful Robert the Bruce. The resurgence of interest in all things Scottish, inspired in part by Hollywood's "tartan" movies, has prompted the review which calls for a more balanced curriculum, with more emphasis on the nation's social and cultural achievements.

Up to the age of 14, the subject matter of history lessons is left largely to the judgment of individual teachers. The 37½ hours a year devoted to history tend to focus on topics such as the Second World War and the Jacobite rebellion, the report claims. Because only 35 per cent of pupils choose to take the

subject at Standard Grade — the Scottish equivalent of GCSEs — many leave the system with only a sketchy knowledge of their country's past.

At Standard Grade the report highlights some good practice, but suggests that the range of topics may still be too narrow.

David Duncan, secretary to the working group, acknowledges that the focus on "romantic" stories of the past is understandable lower down the school when children may not be able to grasp more complex philosophical ideas. But he said: "Certain topics might be

receiving a disproportionate emphasis. That does not mean that events such as the Jacobites or the Viking raids should not be taught, but there needs to be more of a balance between those and other parts of the curriculum."

He claims there is room within the current framework to shift the emphasis to more positive topics, such as the Scottish Enlightenment. During the 18th century philosophers such as Voltaire looked to Edinburgh and great thinkers such as David Hume and Adam Smith for direction. This century Scotland has been respon-

sible for a number of important inventions, such as television and the telephone.

Dr Richard Findlay, history lecturer at the University of Strathclyde, says the review is important because perceptions of the past shape a country's identity. "There is a sort of negative perception of Scottish history, not so much among historians, but the general public."

"If you ask the ordinary man in the street what the key events are, he will say Bannockburn, Mary Queen of Scots, the Union, and the Jacobite failure and he'll probably

finish off with Argentina 1978 [the World Cup]. The high points don't immediately jump out," Dr Findlay said.

What he calls the "recent renaissance" in historical academic thinking has not yet filtered down to schools and this is something the review group hopes to address through teacher training. "It is not a question of promoting a triumphalist view of Scottish history, it is more to do with gaining a balance between the high and low points."

The group will issue a final report in November.

*An offer for people with a lot to say.*

## Explorers claim glacier as true source of Amazon

By Nick Nuttall

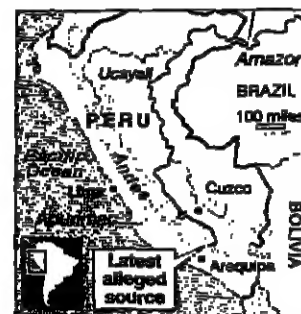
THE source of the Amazon, long debated by geographers, is an underground glacier in the southern Peruvian Andes, an international team of scientists claimed yesterday.

A nine-day investigation has pinpointed an icy creek called Apachita crevice, which is 16,958ft above sea level near the city of Arequipa and about 625 miles from the Peruvian capital, Lima.

Opinions differ on the source of the river, which carries a fifth of the world's flowing water into the Atlantic. *Encyclopaedia Britannica* puts it at 15,875ft at a small lake called Lauricocha. In 1971, an expedition by the National Geographic Society located the source at the higher Cachaussana crevice, near the Bolivian border.

The new source, found by a team led by the Polish explorer and scientist Dr Jack Palkiewicz, is close to the one identified by the society's team, but a few feet higher.

Yesterday John Hemming, director of the Royal Geographical Society in London and an Amazonian explorer, said the latest source, in one of the remotest parts of the country, was probably the most accurate. He said that

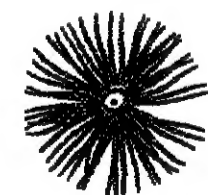


the debate focused on how one defined the source of a big river. Some consider the source to be the highest point at which the waters feeding it are located, while others believe it should be the place furthest from the mouth.

Another view points to the river or lake which contributes the most water to the main river, which is why Lake Lauricocha can be cited.

But Dr Hemming added: "Most people would say distance is the one that really matters, in which case the Poles are on the right one, considering distance from the Atlantic."

He said the site was the headwater of a river called the Apurimac which becomes the Ucayali. It joins with the Marañon to create the Amazon.



Diadema antillarum (Long-Spined Urchin)



Muggus thugeri (Common Hoodlum)



Latrodectus mactans (Black Widow Spider)

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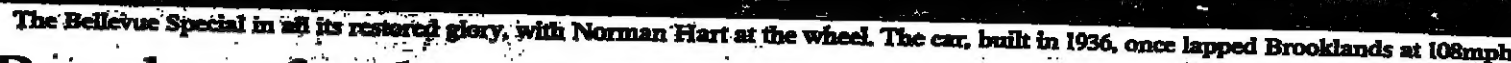
BY DALYA ALBERGE, ARTS CORRESPONDENT

Yesterday Mr Brandler expressed disbelief that the National Heritage Depart-



Canon John Haliburton,  
the Chancellor of St Paul's, is

Baker University, which boasts one of America's finest collections of bibles, last year paid \$1 million for the derelict 130-year-old Sproxton Chapel near Grantham, Lincolnshire, where the father of Baroness Thatcher preached.



**BY KEVIN EASON**

The silver single-seater is a 1936 NA Bellevue Special that once lapped Brooklands at 108mph. It was raced by Wilkie Wilkinson, one of the most famous pre-war drivers. After the war, the car raced at the first meeting held at the Goodwood circuit. Mr Hart



suspected that it might have a racing pedigree when he bought it in 1972 and checked the chassis number with the MG Car Club, which authenticated it. Its distinguished pedigree persuaded him to spend eight years and £10,000 on returning it to the condition

"I spent several years writing all over the world to people who had owned the car and built up a collection of 30 to 40 pre-war photographs of it," he said. "It has never been a road car. I

How much the car is worth could only be tested at auction, but Simon Kidston of Coys, one of the country's top auction houses, was impressed by its history. "The fact that it raced at Brooklands shortly before the track closed in 1939 is significant, as is the association with Wilkinson."

Michael Allison, an expert at the MG Car Club, said yesterday: "A car with this history could be worth as much as £40,000. It is significant because it was one of the very few MGs without a supercharger to top 100mph at Brooklands."

BY DALYA ALBERG



Residents were not all in agreement with the councilors' priorities. Robin Journal, a jeweller, said: "People have asked me if the council has gone mad. I find its attitude incredible."

**By Nick Nuttall, Technology Correspondent**

Officials have submitted a 4-point plan to avoid another loss. The findings confirm the early suspicions of scientists over the loss on June 4, about 40 seconds after lift-off from Kourou, French Guiana.

The inquiry's recommendations include a critical reappraisal of all software and improved testing using real equipment and components rather than reliance solely on simulations.

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Barnsley chop may disappear from menu as repercussions of Brussels warning spread worldwide

## Scare over sheep spines may mean ban on historic British speciality

By MICHAEL HORNSBY, AGRICULTURE CORRESPONDENT, AND DIANA THORP

THE Barnsley chop, one of Britain's most celebrated national dishes, may disappear from menus if the EU's proposed ban on sheep offal goes ahead.

The inclusion of the spinal cord in the ban would affect traditional dishes which include the backbone such as saddle of lamb, the Barnsley chop and rosettes, where the spinal cord is left in place.

But Douglas Hogg, the Agriculture Minister, said in Brussels yesterday that any ban on the spinal cord was likely to apply only to sheep over 12 months old.

Most British lambs are

### CONSUMERS

slaughtered at less than a year and the ban would therefore not apply. None of the proposed restrictions would apply to lambs under six months old.

The Asda supermarket chain welcomed the proposed measures.

"All of our lamb is new season and under six months old so I understand it would not even come under these regulations," a spokesman said. Both Asda and Marks and Spencer said that spinal cord was already removed

from their lamb.

Diane McCrea, of the Consumers' Association, urged consumers to await the announcement of new Government guidelines. "Lots of people have been turning to lamb from beef, but they should not panic and should wait to see what the recommendations are."

The proposed restrictions on the sale of sheep's brain and spleen should have little effect on sales here as there is little or no market for these items anyway.

Spleen is not eaten and brain has a tiny market only among some Muslim communities, although the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries warned people in the Outer Hebrides to stop making a traditional dish of sheep's head soup.

The broth, which involves boiling the sheep's head, has been prepared as a delicacy for centuries in the Western Isles and the recipe occurs in many local cook books.

However there have been no recorded cases of CJD in the Outer Hebrides in the wake of the current BSE scare.

A spokesman from the Meat and Livestock Association said 95 per cent of sheep's heads were destroyed in Britain because they have little economic value.

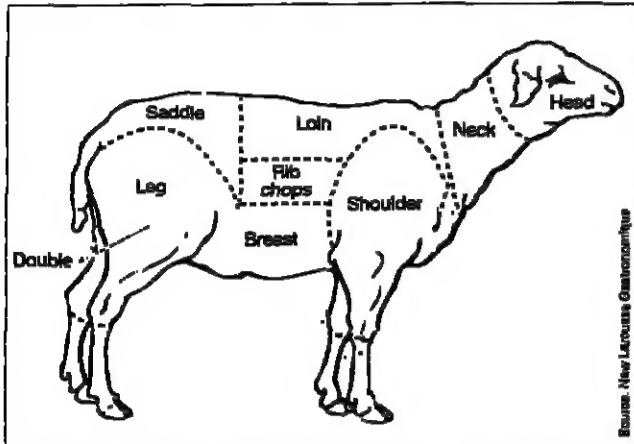
He said all other cuts of lamb, including mince, hags, shoulder, leg, breast and rack of lamb would not be affected by such a ban.

He said few consumers today cook the neck, rings, usually used for stewing, or the saddle of lamb, which is rarely sold in shops and used mainly by caterers for roasting.

The main casualty of a ban would be the double loin or Barnsley chop. Dr Richard North, of the Quality Meats Association, said a ban on



Watching the last cattle sold at Hawkins in King's Lynn, a family auctioneers closing after four generations



### LAMB PRODUCTS

Main cuts of lamb: neck, shoulder, loin, chump, chump chops, leg, breast, baron, saddle.

Poorer cuts: mince.

Mechanically recovered meat (MRM): edible tissues not stripped from bones to same extent as cows, but vegetarian groups claim low-quality lamb MRM is found in pies. Also in beef and pork sausages, burgers and pet food.

Brains: sheep's brains are French delicacy.

Bones: fertiliser. Use in feeds stopped in April.

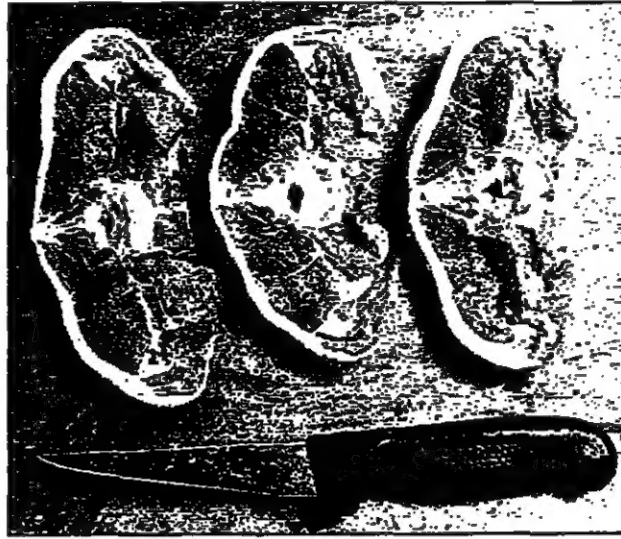
Keratin: protein in horns and hooves used in shampoos.

Elastin: protein uniting muscle fibres used in moisturisers.

Lanolin: fat extracted from sheep's wool.

Cholecalciferol (D3): vitamin derived from lanolin.

Gelatin: mostly from cows, some may come from sheep.



The Barnsley chop, favoured by the Prince Regent

column fully removed there should be no cause for concern," she said.

A 136-year-old cattle market closed yesterday — the latest victim of the BSE crisis.

Livestock auctioneer Barry Hawkins sold his last cattle from the market in King's Lynn, Norfolk, which had been established by his great grandfather in 1860.

It was a sad day for the 58-year-old businessman, who

has seen the number of cows passing through his market fall from 80 down to 20 a day following fears of Mad Cow Disease.

"BSE has closed us down. It was a cock-up by the Government. The number of cattle we were selling was dropped and so have the prices by 30 per cent," said Mr Hawkins.

"There was no way we could continue. It is very sad. There was a sudden slump after the

scare, it wasn't gradual and I could see no light at the end of the tunnel. It has been a very hard decision. I would like to start it up again, but I can't think that this will happen," said Mr Hawkins.

"I work on a commission basis. Two and two aren't making five. They are making three now."

"If I thought the trend was going to change, I would have snuck with it, but I have got to try and be realistic. I would like to start it up again, but I can't think that this will happen," said Mr Hawkins.

Livestock breeders will now have to take their cattle to market in Norwich and Bury St Edmunds, ending a 136-year association with the town.

Meanwhile the New Zealand government said on yesterday it was seeking more detail on European scientific evidence that BSE could infect sheep, but officials doubted whether the link was new.

EU Agriculture Commissioner Franz Fischler said on Monday it was possible what looked like cases of the well-known disease scrapie in sheep could in fact be bovine spongiform encephalopathy or BSE.

## Market prices fall by 20% in one day

### FARMERS

By MICHAEL HORNSBY

BRITAIN'S 90,000 sheep farmers were bracing themselves yesterday for a slump in consumer demand after the disclosure that some sheep products are to be banned because of fears they may be infected with "mad cow" disease.

Up to now the sheep industry, which earns farmers some £1.2 billion a year in domestic sales and a further £280 million in exports, has been one of the beneficiaries of the beef crisis as consumers have switched to other meats.

The first signs of panic were reflected yesterday in falls of up to 20 per cent in sheep prices at livestock markets, which knocked up to £5 off the price of a lamb.

Prices fell to about 95p a kg compared with about 115p this time last week, wiping out much of the gains lamb prices have made since the BSE crisis broke in March. Farmers were yesterday hoping that consumers would not panic and would see the ban as a purely precautionary measure against a theoretical risk.

Leuan Lewis, who keeps 500 breeding ewes near Llan-gollen, North Wales, said: "I hope people are not going to overreact. Even if there is only a theoretical risk of spongiform encephalopathy getting into sheep, I hope they will accept that it is better to be upfront and take the necessary precautions."

He added: "Recently our lamb prices have greatly improved on the back of the fall in the beef trade. Last week I sold 51 lambs for 117p a kilogram. This time last year I was getting less than 100p."

The higher income from his sheep has helped to offset the loss Mr Lewis has been suffering on his beef cattle. Cattle prices are about £100 an animal lower than a year ago and Mr Lewis is running up big feed bills as he keeps cattle back on his farm in hope of market improvement.

Colin Maclean, director-general of the Meat and Livestock Commission, said: "About 95 per cent of sheep carcasses already have their head removed at the abattoir and the spleen is not used. So these measures should have virtually no impact on our industry."

"Although there is no evidence of spongiform encephalopathy in sheep, and although scrapie has been around in sheep for 250 years and never been found to present any hazard to humans, it is always better to err on the side of caution."

But Anthony Gibson, the National Farmers' Union's regional director for southwest England, criticised Franz Fischler, the European Agriculture Commissioner, for proposing the ban. "It is completely unjustified," he said. "Scrapie has been studied for centuries and there is absolutely no evidence of any link to BSE."

Marks & Spencer said there had been no change in the price of lamb since the BSE scare. However, it has introduced a lamb special this week which has reduced the price.

Safeway said demand increased significantly after the BSE scare, but had now decreased and stabilised at a level still at higher than before BSE.

Organic lamb has decreased in price since the BSE scare. Tim Finney, an organic meat wholesaler from Swindon, said the price of lamb had gone down from £3.30 per kg to £2.70. "If the lamb price collapses we will ignore it. It might even increase our price because people appreciate we farm in a completely different way."

## Fears were aroused by infection during lab test

### SCIENTISTS

THE move to ban certain lamb and goat products follows research showing that "mad cow" disease can be transmitted artificially to sheep in laboratory tests (Michael Hornsby writes).

Scientists disagree about the significance of the finding, but accept that it may be right to err on the side of caution in removing even the most theoretical threat to human health from the eating of lamb.

Scrapie — spongiform encephalopathy in sheep — has not hitherto caused humans any apparent harm. The brain condition Creutzfeldt-Jakob Disease, affects one in a million people, even in countries with no scrapie.

What is worrying scientists is that sheep might have acquired a new strain of scrapie from eating meat and bone meal derived from cattle remains infected with BSE, reversing the process by which cattle are thought to have contracted the disease.

John Bourne, director of the Institute of Animal Health at Compton, Berkshire, said: "If BSE [bovine spongiform encephalopathy] has got into sheep, we cannot be absolutely 100 per cent sure that it will behave identically to scrapie and pose no risk to humans."

Research by the institute in 1993 found that BSE could be transmitted to sheep by feeding them infected brain tissue from cattle or by injecting it into their brains. Infectivity was detected in the brains and spleen. More recent work by

the institute, published last month in *The Veterinary Record*, discovered that spleen tissue from these artificially infected sheep produce a pattern of disease when injected into laboratory mice that is similar to that caused by BSE material from cattle.

"It has to be emphasised that we have been unable so far to detect any sign of a new strain of scrapie that might indicate that BSE has got into sheep in the field," Professor Bourne said. "But it may be that we have not been looking hard enough."

Scientists have transmitted BSE orally to goats and mice as well as to sheep. Pigs have been infected, but only by injection into the brain. Chick-

ens are resistant to infection either orally or by inoculation. The Government's spongiform encephalopathy advisory committee (SEAC) is recommending that sheep brain and spleen be excluded from the human food chain.

In practice, no lamb spleen is eaten anyway and 95 per cent of sheep carcasses already have their heads removed at the abattoir. In Britain, only some Muslims are thought to eat sheep's brain. Scientists see no danger in the muscle meat of sheep or in liver and kidney.

Some European scientists want spinal cord covered by the ban as well, at any rate in sheep older than 12 months, though their British colleagues are not entirely convinced. Such a ban could affect some traditional cuts.

Britain has banned feeding meat and bone meal to sheep since July 1983. Although farmers used to give breeding ewes meat and bone meal as a protein supplement, most lambs are fed almost entirely on grass. Exposure to infected feed would thus have been much less than in cattle.

Francis Anthony, past president of the British Veterinary Association, said: "This seems to be carrying the precautionary principle to ridiculous lengths. Sheep deliberately infected with BSE do not lick and rub themselves against fence posts, as classical cases of scrapie. If sheep were suffering from a new kind of scrapie, we would have noticed."



Anthony said caution was going too far

## French gourmands face lean times

By BEN MACINTYRE

### REACTION

FRENCH butchers reported a sharp drop in the price of lamb yesterday after European officials announced plans to ban certain offal from sheep, goat and deer.

Three weeks ago, the French Government announced a ban on "all sales of the central nervous system of ruminants", including brains and spinal columns of cows, sheep and goats, after recommendations from scientists. The spleen, thymus (used in ris de veau or sweetbreads), intestines and tonsils are also

banned from human consumption if the animal was born before July 1991.

The government bans deprived France of yet more culinary delicacies and added to the meat industry's economic nightmare. The Government urged that its precautionary measures be extended throughout the EU and the Agriculture Ministry yesterday commended the attitude of Franz Fischler, the Agriculture Commissioner.

*Le Monde* reported yesterday that at Rungis food market outside Paris the price of lamb, which had climbed during the initial BSE crisis, had dropped by a third in the last few weeks.

With *cervelle d'agneau* (lamb's brains) joining the banned list, French gourmands with exotic tastes are facing increasingly lean times.

"Goats and sheep gone to pot," declared a headline in

*France-Soir* yesterday. "Is this the end of roast kid?" The newspaper noted that recipes for sheep and goat offal can be found in any book of traditional French cuisine, adding: "The haggis, celebrated but hard to find in France, can also perhaps be considered a dish in danger — even when one is tipsy from the tastiest whiskies."

"If in doubt, abstain," declared *France-Soir*, advice that could hardly be further removed from French gastronomic tradition and an indication of the deep effects of "mad cow" disease.

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# Major faces long summer on the defensive

The real difference between the parties on Europe is that Tony Blair could lead his party into a single currency, if he decided there were economic advantages for Britain, whereas John Major cannot, even if he wanted to do so. That was vividly shown by the contrast at Prime Minister's Questions yesterday between Mr Blair's contemptuous dismissal of an anti-single currency pamphlet from some left-wing Labour MPs in the "People's Europe Campaign" and Mr Major's evident discomfort at the reminder of his party's divisions.

Mr Major's stock response is to argue that Labour is "split on the issue from top to bottom". Of course, Labour is divided over Europe, but its differences are not as significant as the Tories'. At varying times about 50 Labour MPs have voted against Maastricht or expressed reservations

about a single currency, though the hard core is not as large. They cannot really be compared with the smaller number of Tory sceptics who have voted against the Government over the past four years since their total has been squeezed by tight whipping, while Labour MPs effectively enjoyed a free vote.

More important is that in the Tory party, the young and ambitious — including candidates replacing retiring MPs — tend to be on the sceptic rather than the pro-European side. By contrast, eager young Labour MPs tend to be pro-European. Some of the backers of "People's Europe" are veteran opponents of the EU, such as Peter Shore and Nigel Spearing, who will leave the Commons at the election. While Tory pro-Europeans are battling against the tide in their party, Labour pro-Europeans are swimming with it.



Many Labour MPs and spokesmen have serious doubts about a single currency. They would have to be convinced that joining would not involve draconian spending and tax measures. But there is nothing to justify the alarmist and ill-informed tone of yesterday's paper from "People's Europe" with its false claim that public spending would have to be cut by £18 billion to meet the public borrowing guidelines. Even after the latest revision upwards by the Treasury of its borrowing forecasts, the British Budget deficit should fall within the target level in 1997-98.

Mr Blair has been deliberately opaque about the precise criteria for joining a single currency. But if the economic conditions are satisfied —

a big enough if in itself — he should be able to override internal political opposition, as he has in the past. That would be his instinct. And the recent mini-manifesto hardened the pledge to seek the consent of the people through "either an election or a referendum". Labour would probably be backed by the Liberal Democrats and even possibly a small number of Tory pro-Europeans.

By contrast, the Tories are stuck in their laboriously negotiated compromise with no room for manoeuvre this side of the election. In that respect, David Heathcoat-Amory's resignation has not helped the sceptics, since it has produced statements from Mr Major and other senior ministers restating the current, all-options-open line. It would now be very hard to change the policy.

Despite being harried by the

sceptic press, Kenneth Clarke has entrenched his position in the Treasury with the appointment to the exotic post of "Exchequer Secretary to the Treasury" of Phillip Oppenheim, who was his parliamentary private secretary before he became a junior minister. Apart from the promotion of David Willetts within the Cabinet Office, the rest of last night's reshuffle is of interest only within Westminster, and even there not for long.

The shape of the Major Government remains as before: the factions are carefully balanced and loyalties are rewarded. Mr Major will start the long summer recess on the defensive, as so often, while, despite internal criticism, Mr Blair remains unshaken as the self-confident front-runner.

PETER RIDDELL

## Euro-sceptic Labour MPs harangued by angry colleague

BY ALICE THOMSON, POLITICAL REPORTER

A LABOUR press conference descended into farce yesterday when Euro-sceptics and Euro-enthusiasts became embroiled in a slanging match.

Five Labour Euro-sceptics had begun launching a controversial campaign to persuade Tony Blair to rule out joining a single currency when another Labour backbencher accused them of disloyalty to the party.

Denis MacShane, a pro-European Labour MP and Blair loyalist, had slipped into the back of the Westminster press conference to hand out leaflets calling for co-operation with Brussels. First he just shook his head and muttered that the Euro-sceptics were bad eggs. But suddenly he lost his patience and spent nearly a quarter of an hour haranguing his colleagues.

The outbreak of open warfare on Europe has embarrassed party leaders, who were trying to capitalise on the resignation of David Heathcoat-Amory and Tory splits over a single currency. They fear that the squabble makes Labour look even more divided than the Tories. "A fear we thought was almost impossible," one Labour aide said.

Mr MacShane was furious

when the Euro-sceptic Labour MPs warned Mr Blair that he would face "turmoil" in his first term if he went ahead with joining a single currency. He said: "On the day the Tories expose their hopeless divisions over Europe it is unbelievable that a group of Labour MPs should seek to open up old wars that we saw in the 1970s and 1980s."

The Euro-sceptics warned the party that it would never be able to find £18 billion of public spending cuts, which they believe would be necessary to meet the tough entry rules to a single currency. They also told Gordon Brown, the Shadow Chancellor, that he would be out of a job if Britain surrendered power over interest rates to the European Central Bank.

Diane Abbott, a member of Labour's national executive, said: "Someone talked about turmoil. You will get turmoil if Gordon Brown as Chancellor in a Labour Government has to make £18 billion worth of spending cuts and has to give way to the European bankers. He might as well put a notice on his door saying Gone Away."

The Labour leftwingers say

that they have the backing of more than 50 backbenchers for a party pledge in the manifesto against a single currency. They also launched a pamphlet, *The Single Currency — Aiming Labour's Programme*, which sets out the socialist case against Britain's entry into monetary union under the conditions imposed by the Maastricht treaty.

Dennis Davies, a former Treasury minister, made it clear that he would oppose a Blair government on the question of a single currency. He said that the cost of joining was equivalent to closing down half of all the hospital trusts or two thirds of secondary schools.

"I confess to the old-fashioned belief that democratic governments which have the will can, and should, seek to influence events and should not surrender economic power to global markets and central banks," he said.

Alan Simpson, MP for Nottingham South, said: "You cannot sell this to the public, and increasingly a Labour government would find it cannot sell it to the party or Parliament."

Brian Mawhinney, the Tory



party chairman, said: "The Labour pamphlet blows a gaping hole in new Labour's pretence of unity. It reaffirms that a quarter of all Labour MPs are on a collision course with Mr Blair and Mr Brown."

The Labour leadership all

less of the circumstances, by opposing our Maastricht opt-out."

Mr Major told Mr Blair in the Commons: "Your party is split on the issue from top to bottom." Mr Blair, asked by Mr Major whether he agreed with the Labour pamphlet, said: "No, I don't agree with

it." Later Robin Cook, the Shadow Foreign Secretary, tried to play down differences within the party on Europe insisting that, unlike the Tories, most Labour Euro-sceptics wanted to remain within the EU.

Letters, page 17

## New Tory rebel argues his case Resignation hailed as turning point

BY JILL SHERMAN  
CHIEF POLITICAL  
CORRESPONDENT

THE Tory Party's newest backbencher set out his case yesterday against a single European currency.

David Heathcoat-Amory, who resigned as Paymaster-General on Monday, argued that economic and monetary union would involve huge risks and would court disaster. Sitting uneasily in

his new role as backbencher, he said that his decision to resign had been "extremely difficult and traumatic" but he needed the freedom to speak out. He challenged Kenneth Clarke to put the case for a single currency but sidestepped questions about whether the Chancellor should resign.

Presenting his pamphlet, *A Single European Currency. Why the United Kingdom Must say No*, he argued that

within a single currency, the EU would need a much larger budget to try to compensate for changes and shocks affecting economies within the currency area. "This would be several times larger than the present budget, and it would be under central control. It would present a huge step towards a federal European state, which many people do not want."

He insisted that the Government's present policy of neither ruling in nor ruling out a single currency was untenable as the public had a right to know where the main parties stood before the general election. "The United Kingdom has to decide whether to join next year. Between now and then there will be a general election. I think the

public are entitled to know what is our present stand on this issue."

Asked about Mr Clarke he said: "I think he has been a successful Chancellor and, in particular, I have admired the way that he has been a better judge of interest rate changes than the Bank of England. So there is something of an irony because he apparently wishes to give control of interest rates to a bank in Frankfurt."

The pamphlet, published by the Bruges Group, argues that monetary union could not deal with the differences, divergences and cyclical variations in the European economies. "A single currency will have dire economic consequences which will create a new division of Europe," it says.

PRO-EUROPEAN Tory MPs hailed David Heathcoat-Amory's resignation as a turning point in their battle to convince John Major to keep open the option of joining a single currency (Andrew Pierce writes).

They heaped praise on the Prime Minister for standing against Mr Heathcoat-Amory's demands for a commitment against joining monetary union as a price for remaining in the Government.

Tory pro-Europeans led by Edwina Currie, MP for South Derbyshire, dismissed reports that Kenneth Clarke, the Chancellor, had been more isolated by the departure of his Treasury Minister. At a press

conference of the European Movement, she said that Mr Heathcoat-Amory's failure to sway Mr Major showed that the Prime Minister was digging in his heels. She added: "The Euro-sceptics are in retreat."

Quentin Davies, Tory MP for Stamford and Spalding and vice-chairman of the European Movement, said: "The Euro-sceptics are pretty desperate and have seriously underestimated the Prime Minister." He accused Mr Heathcoat-Amory of "an extraordinary attempt to rail-road Number 10" into changing policy and of being naive to believe he could succeed.

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## Blair promises councils power on a tight budget

BY IAN MURRAY  
COMMUNITY CORRESPONDENT

LOCAL authorities can expect more powers but no extra money under a Labour government, Tony Blair told a subdued audience of councillors in London yesterday.

Calling for a new relationship between central and local government, Mr Blair promised the 600 delegates from all parties and counties that he would allow them greater autonomy but warned them that they would need to stay within a tight budget.

"The future of local councils will not be based on spending an increased share of the national cake but on improved efficiency and ensuring that every council sees its aim as matching the performance of the best," he said. "A Labour government will be obliged to keep a tight control of our public finances, to keep interest rates and inflation low."

The speech was his first comprehensive policy statement on local government. His audience was the assembly of the new Local Government Association, which will combine the work of the three present council associations from next year.

Mr Blair agreed that the centrally imposed cap on council budgets should go, but said that a Labour government would protect the public



Blair: called for greater efficiency

from excessive increases. He won rare applause when he promised to allow money raised from council house sales to be spent on new building projects. But this would be done only "on a phased basis".

His commitment to end the "inflexible, bureaucratic and inefficient" system of compulsory competitive tendering was popular. However, councils would not be allowed to award contracts to in-house departments for ideological reasons if a service could be provided more efficiently by the private sector.

"Competition is fine provided it doesn't lead to diminishing wages and conditions of the people who work for us." Councils would therefore be allowed more freedom to pick

contractors but if they made a bad choice his government would intervene.

There was mild heckling when he said he believed that there was a strong case for directly elected mayors. Councillors might not like the idea, but it was highly popular with the public.

New methods of choosing democratic leadership were part of his aim of "reinventing" local government. "The future must lie in the centre allowing localities to have more power, to encourage new initiatives by permitting councils to introduce pilot schemes and for localities in turn to understand that they have to use their power with prudence and responsibility."

Sir Jeremy Betcham, the Newcastle Labour councillor who chaired the meeting, was not surprised to hear there would be no bonanza under a Labour government. "We were not expecting blank cheques," he said.

Simon Jenkins, page 16

IN PARLIAMENT

TODAY in the Commons: summer adjournment debate; backbench debate; questions to education and employment ministers; Education Bill; School Inspections Bill; Over (Scotland) Bill; accelerated slaughter programme; Draft Code of Conduct for MPs; Central Office of Information; and

## Business rates cut examined by Tories

BY ANDREW PIERCE

JOHN MAJOR signalled his support yesterday for reforms of the business rate that could form part of the Tories' general election manifesto.

Evidence from the Federation of Small Businesses has convinced the Prime Minister of the need to reduce the uniform business rate, which is set by central government. Under plans being considered by the Downing Street policy unit, local authorities would be able to reduce their rates to try to generate employment.

Mr Major, in a foreword to a pamphlet published by the Conservative Political Centre, said: "Lifting the burden on smaller businesses is at the heart of the Conservatives' policy for promoting enterprise and job creation."

The pamphlet, written by Bernard Jenkin, Tory MP for Colchester North, has been published as valuation offices up and down the country struggle to cope with a backlog of thousands of appeals against the uniform business rate. Many companies have gone into liquidation before their appeal can be heard. Mr Jenkin advocates a banded scheme based on rateable values with discounts for smaller premises.

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## Crash jet's wing shows trace of rare explosive

FROM JAMES BONE IN NEW YORK

INVESTIGATORS scrambled yesterday to confirm a preliminary test that showed traces of a rare explosive on a piece of pockmarked wreckage of TWA Flight 800. At the same time, divers found dozens more bodies entombed in the fuselage on the seabed in the crash area off Long Island.

An initial test on a trailing section of wing from near the plane's baggage compartment yielded the first evidence that the New York-Paris flight last Wednesday might have been blown out of the sky by a bomb or missile.

A so-called Egis scanner, a sensor that uses gas chromatography to detect the vapour emanating from plastic explosives, made what was described as a "borderline positive reading". Officials said the substance, which they did not name, was not a common explosive, such as dynamite, C4 or Semtex. One source was quoted as saying that federal investigators had seen traces of it only once before.

That the affected wreckage came from the underside of the wing suggests a bomb could have been stowed in the baggage compartment. The piece was pockmarked in a way consistent with damage from an explosive device.

A second test with another piece of field equipment, however, proved negative. The fragment and other items have been sent to the FBI's main crime laboratory at Quantico, Virginia, for further examination.

Further forensic science evi-

dence is expected when divers raise large chunks of the Boeing 747 from the seabed, more than 100ft below the surface. Searchers have identified a 500-yard trail of wreckage containing hundreds of pieces. Among them is a 60ft by 30ft section of fuselage thought to hold some 40 bodies. Officials said the fuselage might also be blocking the locating signal emitted by the plane's two black box recorders.

The first salvage operation goal was to recover as many of the 230 victims' bodies as possible. Only then did the Coast Guard and Navy plan to start hoisting wreckage to the surface.

The 225ft USS Grasp, a US Navy salvage vessel carrying a small submarine with a robot arm, arrived on the scene overnight to help.

Meanwhile, FBI agents investigating a possible terrorist plot fanned out to interview members of the Arab communities in Brooklyn and Jersey City and questioned boatyard workers along the Long Island shore. Agents have taken samples from boats in an apparent attempt to find any evidence that a missile had been fired.

Investigators thought they had got a break when one boatyard reported renting a mooring to two men on the night of the crash who never returned to reclaim their \$66 (£43) deposit.

But the men, both from the area, were later identified. They said their boat had not fitted into the mooring.



One woman comforts another at Monday's beach memorial service on Fire Island for Flight 800's victims

## Anti-terror talks held on day of disaster

FROM TOM RHODES IN WASHINGTON

AMERICA'S airline overseers convened only hours before the disaster to consider European and Middle Eastern security measures for countering the threat of terrorism at US airports.

Less than 12 hours before the crash, a Federal Aviation Administration panel was convened to conduct a comprehensive review of airport security in the wake of the 1988 disaster at Lockerbie. The advisory committee, which included FBI,

Secret Service, Pentagon and State Department officials, is now facing urgent demands to issue a report which could lead to swift legislation.

Although the committee is to report to the FAA by October 15, it seems likely that Wednesday's crash will prompt a more rapid reaction. Victims of Pan Am 103, the group created after the Lockerbie bombing, is also involved in the committee.

Officials say they are considering a tighter security "baseline" that may include new bomb detection equipment, criminal checks for employees and re-

quirements that passengers arrive much earlier at airports for screening. Better techniques for profiling terrorists, sealing aircraft and airport terminals and new fixtures to detect explosives in luggage and cargo areas are also under review.

The FAA is also contemplating the introduction of a table enabling passengers to judge airlines' safety standards.

□ New York: The judge hearing the case against Ramzi Yousef, charged with plotting to bomb US airliners, said he was considering whether coverage of the disaster obliged him to declare a mistrial.

## Republicans urge Dole to embrace tax cut

FROM TOM RHODES IN WASHINGTON

TOP Republican leaders held an unprecedented conference on Capitol Hill last night to push Bob Dole's flailing presidential campaign in the right direction and avoid the possibility of a Clinton landslide in November that many believe could surrender Congress to the Democrats.

The meeting, which was attended by Newt Gingrich, the House Speaker, Dick Armey, the House majority leader, and Trent Lott, the Senate majority leader, was being held ostensibly to demonstrate a united commitment to tax reform, lower tax rates and economic growth. Behind the scenes, however, the meeting was aimed at convincing Mr Dole that he should recognise the mistakes made over

the past year and embrace a tax reduction that might yet help to bring about President Clinton's departure from the White House.

The latest USA Today/CNN poll published yesterday gave Mr Clinton a 20-point lead over his challenger with most Americans believing the President could handle every issue better than Mr Dole or Ross Perot, the billionaire Texan and founder of the Reform Party.

Mr Dole is said to be considering a tax cut as the centrepiece of a forthcoming economic plan which he is expected to unveil before the Republican convention in San Diego next month. The two leading options under consideration are a substantial cut in taxes across the board or a reversal of two previous rate

increases imposed in 1990 and 1993.

Many conservatives have been promoting the idea of a sweeping tax cut to spur economic growth and seize the voters' imaginations as Ronald Reagan did. They say a 15

**6 We want to get the country focused on the economic debate 2**

per cent reduction would have greater political impact than any repeal.

Traditional deficit hawks have issued warning, however, that Mr Dole could jeopardise Republican attempts to balance the budget, a theme he supported throughout his long Senate

career and one he has promised to conclude by 2002.

Some advisers expect him to compromise by proposing a smaller tax cut, of perhaps 10 per cent, or an unspecified reduction to produce a flatter and fairer tax system. This tactic is favoured by many in the party, including Jack Kemp, the former Housing Secretary, and Steve Forbes, Mr Dole's rival in the primaries.

The organisers of the Capitol Hill meeting were quick to sidestep any suggestion that it had been convened to energise the Dole campaign. "We want to get the country focused on the importance of the debate that will take place this autumn," said Connie Mack, the Florida senator. "That debate is about the performance of the econo-

## Fathers face 'wanted' list

Washington: American parents who refuse to pay child support could soon find themselves on "Wanted" posters in post offices and on the Internet.

President Clinton announced the action to crack down on a "moral outrage and social disaster" during a campaign swing through California. If all the defaulters met their legal responsibilities, the Government could move 800,000 women and children off the welfare registers, he said.

It was a cheap but popular proposal for the president in an election year, one that is likely to bolster his standing among women. Most delinquent parents are fathers. "If you don't pay, we will track you down," Mr Clinton said.

## President flees mob amid fears of coup in Burundi

BY SAM KILEY, AFRICA CORRESPONDENT, AND JAMES BONE IN NEW YORK

ANGRY stone-throwing Tutsi mourners yesterday drove Burundi's presidential helicopter away from the funeral of 312 fellow tribesmen who had been massacred by Hutus at the weekend.

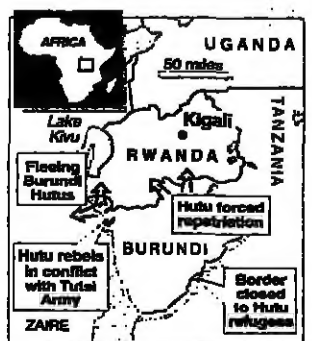
President Ntaryiza's helicopter veered sharply away as the stones rattled against its fuselage and hurried him back to Bujumbura, thwarting his off-repeated wish to bring the embattled ethnic groups together at times of "national tragedy".

In New York yesterday, Boutros Boutros Ghali, the UN Secretary-General, gave warning of an impending coup in Burundi and appealed to the Security Council in a letter to press ahead with contingency planning for a multinational force that could intervene in the country. "Rumours of an impending coup d'etat are widespread, while demonstrations in Bujumbura have become increasingly militant," Dr Boutros Ghali wrote, adding: "Tutsi youth groups have openly demanded admission to the ranks of the army in order to fight Hutu rebels."

Earlier, in the wake of the massacre and defying protests from the United Nations, the Burundi Government vowed to expel 85,000 Rwandan Hutu refugees to Rwanda by next week. So far 20,000 of the refugees have been sent back by Burundi's Tutsi army, but Paul Stromberg, a spokesman for the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in Kigali, the Rwandan capital, was reported yesterday to have said that Burundi has agreed to a temporary halt in the expulsions.

This, however, was contradicted by Patrick Mzambaka, Burundi's Rehabilitation Minister, who said that he was not worried by UNHCR protests over the expulsions. "We will continue the repatriation exercise. We expect 50,000 refugees back home by the weekend and we should empty all the camps by next week," he said.

Rwanda's Hutu majority fled from advancing Tutsi rebels to refugee camps in Zaire, Burundi and Tanzania, where they have organised incursions into Rwanda, now



controlled by a Tutsi Government.

But the main motivation behind the expulsion of the Rwandan Hutus from northern Burundi is that the Hutu diaspora has also supplied arms and training to Burundi's Hutu rebel groups. "There is little real sympathy for the expelled Rwandan Hutus because of what they did in 1994. This is a sign that the Burundian Army is trying to regain control of the north of the country," said an aid worker in Bujumbura. Burundi's army has hotly

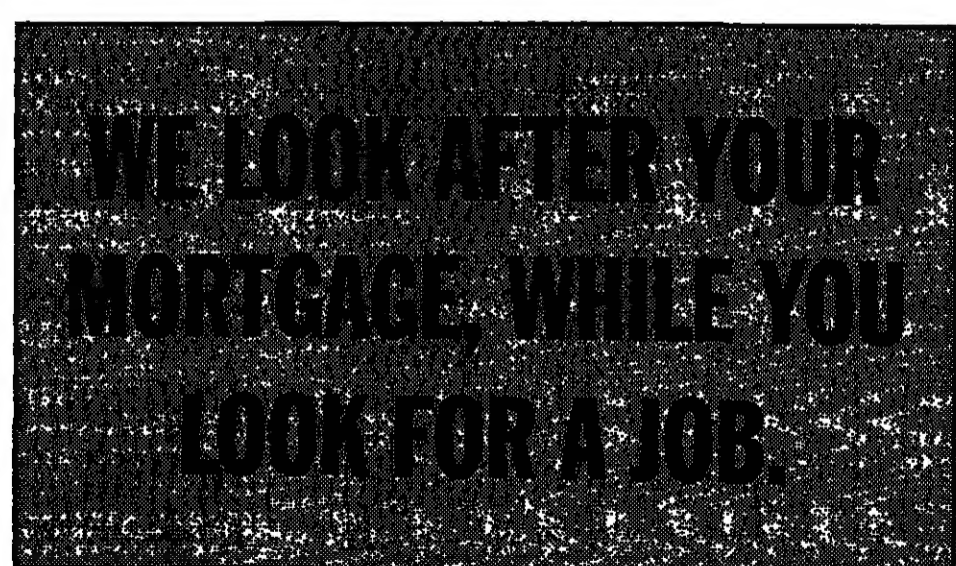
resisted calls from its Hutu President and Tutsi Prime Minister for an international peace-keeping force to put an end to the nightmarish cycle of ethnic massacres in Burundi which are claiming an average of 100 lives a day.

Since the murder of Burundi's first Hutu President by the army in 1993, at least 150,000 people have perished in an endless spiral of slaughter that claims women and children as its main victims.

In singling out Rwanda's Hutu refugees in their camps in northern Burundi, the army has chosen to strike at the softest target. It has been unable to stem a rising tide of violence in Cibitoke province to the west, where Burundian Hutus have been operating from bases in Zaire with the support of their Rwandan cousins.

The expelled refugees face a gruelling half day drive through swamps across bumpy tracks to Rwanda, where they can expect to be screened by the Rwandan authorities searching for men and women who took part in the 1994 genocide. Those arrested can expect to be jailed in appalling conditions in prisons already housing 60,000 other suspects.

The Burundian Government's rejection of UN condemnation has caused near panic among aid agencies and the UNHCR, which fears that Tanzania and Zaire may take similar action against Rwanda's Hutus who have caused an environmental catastrophe in Tanzania and have turned eastern Zaire into a lawless no-go area.



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# 'Oprahlympics' turn sport into soap to win US women viewers

FROM IAN BRODIE  
IN WASHINGTON

IN COVERING the Olympics for American television, NBC has decided it is the drama that matters, not the sports.

The network does not bother with the results or even cover some of the events attracting the biggest crowds, such as soccer. Instead, it runs "up-close and personal" profiles of the private lives of competitors and how they strive to reach Atlanta. The outcome could more

appropriately be called the "Oprahlympics" — after TV chat show host Oprah Winfrey.

NBC has a compelling reason for turning the Games into soap opera: women. The network wants the female factor, not just testosterone. A survey convinced programmers they could persuade women, who tend to shun TV sport, that the Olympics were worth watching if human-interest was on the agenda.

NBC has 140 computer profiles "in the can", and the strategy is working. Women viewers are up by 30 per cent.

Dick Ebersol, president of NBC sports, was candid about his motives: "People want to see the athletes' struggle, their survival against amazing odds and their subsequent moment of victory or, sadly, often times, their agonising moment of defeat."

But employing tabloid techniques to drive up viewing numbers comes from bitter experi-

ence. A news-driven approach in 1988 for *Scholarship Boy* to poor ratings and in Barcelona in 1992 NBC lost \$100 million (\$15 million) by the sports crowded out of prime time on three pay channels.

For Atlanta, NBC has paid \$450 million (£300 million) for the US rights. By promising to deliver a family audience, the network has collected \$675 million from advertisers, some paying half a million dollars for 30 seconds. As Mr Ebersol admitted: "You can't do that if you put on boxing."

With NBC, it is impossible to know when events on screen are live or taped. That would detract from their dramatic value, said Mr Ebersol. Viewers from overseas find the coverage all but unwatchable and there are American critics, too.

NBC will broadcast 171 hours of the Games compared with 300 on Britain's two BBC channels. Media analyst: The European Broadcast Union, a 65-member consortium that paid \$250 million to broadcast the Games in Europe, making it the second-largest Olymp-

ics rights holder behind NBC, has filed a formal protest with the organisers over working conditions after a chorus of media complaints about technology and access.

Reports that the union wanted some money back were denied yesterday by Jarle Hoeysester, an EBU spokesman. But he did not rule out seeking a refund if problems are not corrected quickly. (AP)

Media, page 23  
Reports, pages 42-45, 48

## Security scare adds to woes of gridlock Games

FROM QUENTIN LETTS IN ATLANTA

ORGANISERS of the Atlanta Olympics tried desperately yesterday to stop the centennial Games, previewed as a triumph for American logistics, being renamed the "problem Games".

Atlanta's steamy summer heat sapped spectators, a security scandal erupted, and international horticultural experts were summoned urgently to the main stadium after the grass died. The new glitches compounded the air of crisis created on Monday when bus drivers stopped work and athletes, furious about the transport chaos, went on a sit-down strike.

Security officials, who had given assurances that they were being particularly vigilant after last week's TWA disaster, were gravely embarrassed by disclosures yesterday that an armed man bluffed his way past guards at

the Olympics opening ceremony. Roland Atkins, from Colorado, was not initially challenged at the stadium gates because he was wearing a uniform that looked similar to that worn by official guards.

Mr Atkins, 35, was carrying a loaded .45 Smith and Wesson with 11 rounds and a knife. Mr Atkins, who has been charged with criminal trespass, was in the stadium for two hours before the ceremony, which was opened by President Clinton.

Elsewhere in the stadium yesterday, the groundmen were looking despondently at some rapidly browning grass which died after being covered by a tarpaulin during the opening ceremony. Bob Brennan, the Games spokesman, said the tarpaulin had been

intended to prevent the grass being damaged. Horticultural experts were summoned to see if anything could be done before the track and field events begin on Friday.

The Olympic stadium cost \$209 million (£135 million) and will be partly dismantled after the Games for use as a baseball stadium. The running track will be re-laid elsewhere and the hybrid Bermuda grass — or what is left of it — is likely simply to be thrown away to make way for a synthetic playing surface.

Olympics visitors have been dropping like snipe hit by two barrels on a Scottish moor. Yesterday there were 251 reports of heatstroke collapses, and a member of the International Olympic Committee succumbed to the elements during a game of tennis. Dawn Fraser, the Australian swimming star, was

taken to hospital after suffering heart problems.

The IOC, which awarded Atlanta the Games eight years ago, has watched the problems with dismay and is quietly "surprised" that an American city has been unable to organise a proper transport and computer information system. A D. Frazier, an Atlanta official, said solving the problem was like dealing with "a dinosaur — the head sends the message and ten minutes later the tail wags".

For minutes, read hours, if not days. François Carrard, the IOC executive director, said yesterday: "We are working on the problems and are having more meetings as we try our utmost to get things sorted out. There have been some improvements, but there is still a lot to be done." One remaining problem is providing shelter for the press area in the stadium. It is open to the heavens and reporters' laptop computers are likely to malfunction because of the sunlight or the thunderstorms that have been forecast.

The Los Angeles Olympics in 1984 were such a success that many people expected the Atlanta Games to slot easily into place. Before the start the organisers brushed aside fears that they would not be ready. The optimism of Billy Payne, head of these Games, was pure Atlanta bombast — in the Georgian coastal city of Savannah they have long said of landlocked Atlanta that it would be a seaside resort if it could suck as hard as it could blow. And while the enthusiasm and hospitality of the locals have been boundless, veterans of the Barcelona Olympics have lamented Atlanta's lack of ambience.

The city has done much to repair its downtown area, but it lacks architectural charm. "They might as well have held the Games in Milton Keynes," said one spectator, surveying the acres of concrete.

Visitors have also complained that volunteer street guides have no idea where they are going. Although the volunteers are "local", they have clearly rarely ventured to what were the rough parts of central Atlanta, which have been temporarily colonised by the Games.



Going to pot: How the Toronto Star sees the Games

## World's press gloats over chaos

BY LEVIA LINTON  
AND OUR FOREIGN STAFF

SHAMBOLIC and chaotic is the world's verdict on the organisation of the Atlanta Olympics. Embittered critics which missed the chance of hosting the event are gloating at Atlanta's humiliation.

The Manchester Evening News said its city was lucky to have lost its bid to stage the Olympics in the year 2000, given the problems facing

### REACTION

Atlanta. "Princess Anne ... may well have been right when she said the failure to win the vote was probably the best thing that could have happened," it said. "Instead of enhancing America's reputation for efficiency, the Atlanta experience has made it a laughing stock."

Greece's attempt to host the Games this year was turned down and some Greek news reports gleefully seized on the defects in Atlanta. "A shambles, and that is putting it mildly," was a headline in the tabloid *Adesmeftos Typos*. "All the organisers were concerned about was security. In the first two days, the Ameri-

cans managed to get nothing working properly."

With the images of Barcelona's slick 1992 Olympics still alive, Spain is snuggly assessing the clumsy American efforts. The conservative daily *ABC* commented: "After such a torrent of bungles, it should not surprise us that so many sportsmen, coaches and jour-

nalists remember with nostalgia the Barcelona Olympiad ... In 1992, everything worked to perfection. This year, things have gone wrong right from the start."

Newspapers in Russia, France, Germany, Switzerland and Italy have also ridiculed the organisation of the Games.



Karen Carney of Buffalo, New York, encourages the American swimming team

## Swimmer answers drug-use claims

BY AUDREY MAGEE  
IRELAND CORRESPONDENT

THE double Olympic-gold winner, Michelle Smith, hit back yesterday after a whispering campaign by rivals that she had used performance-enhancing drugs.

Smith, whose two 400-metre victories have made her Ireland's first Olympic swimming champion, said she was the most tested athlete in her native land. She insisted that her success was due to a fitness programme normally used by track and field athletes and that she had never been tempted to take drugs.

"It would be really stupid

for me to do something like that," she said. "Once you are in the top 20 in the world rankings you are liable to be tested by FINA [the international swimming federation] or your own federation."

Janet Evans, the American winner of four gold medals, questioned the Irishwoman's success after failing to reach the final of the 400-metre freestyle won by Smith.

Dr Joe Cummings, the chief medical officer of the Irish team, said Smith had been tested 12 times in the past year. He tested her randomly eight weeks ago in compliance with Olympic regulations for steroids, masking agents, diuretics and stimulants.

John Bruton, the Irish Prime Minister, said Irish people everywhere shared in the pride Smith had brought to the country.

## Peking berates Olympics 'conspiracy'

FROM JAMES FRINGLE  
IN PEKING

CHINA has launched what appears to be a concerted campaign of gripes against the Atlanta Olympics, hinting at conspiracy against Peking. Foreign diplomats said yesterday that the complaints go beyond mere transport difficulties for athletes.

According to the Chinese press, the Games are a disaster and discriminatory. Envoys say Peking's failure to host the 2000 Olympics —

Sydney won that contest — or retaliation for Western criticism over China's heavy-handed organisation of the United Nations Conference on Women last year, may be the motive for the campaign.

China is undergoing a period of nationalist revival, stemming from the party leadership under President Jiang Zemin, and typified by a best-selling book by five young Chinese authors called *China*

can say no. The new volume is typical of the anti-Americanism that has become prevalent here since the United States sent two aircraft carriers near the Taiwan Strait earlier this year during Taiwanese presidential elections.

The *People's Daily* quoted an athlete as saying that if food at the Olympic village did not improve, he would be unable to eat any more in the absence of Chinese cooks.

Another article noted that the Olympics had been held three times in the United

States, "yet it seems like the Americans are new hands". Chinese swimmers were told not to practise in the pool because "there was a suspected bomb". Fire alarms went off at night and athletes had to stand outside for over an hour.

"They never explained what happened," an official said, adding: "It makes one think." The Chinese press has not reported, however, that Chinese television censored the Games' opening to omit the entrance of Taiwan's team into the stadium.

## Grant and Hurley buy Hollywood flat

FROM GILES WHITTELL  
IN LOS ANGELES

HUGH GRANT appears willing to confront his recent past. The actor and former client of a Hollywood prostitute is said to have bought a flat within a mile of the crossroads where his encounter with a woman calling herself Divine Brown nearly ruined his career.

Mr Grant and his girlfriend, Elizabeth Hurley, are said to have chosen as their permanent Hollywood base an apartment near Sunset Boulevard once owned by Bette Davis.

The couple, both working

on the same film, have been looking for a home in Los Angeles since their sudden successes — his in 1994's *Four Weddings and a Funeral*, hers as a cosmetics model — forced them to spend more and more time here over the past two years.

Before her boyfriend's rise to stardom Ms Hurley was virtually unknown: an aspiring English actress seeking work in Hollywood and renting a room in the hills above the studios from the British journalist William Cash. She is now the producer of Mr Grant's forthcoming film, *Extreme Measures*, which is in

post-production at Castle Rock Pictures. The pair had taken to staying at the Four Seasons hotel when in Hollywood.

When Mr Grant was arrested by a Hollywood vice squad on June 27 last year, after committing a "lewd act" with Ms Brown, his love affair with American audiences and the lavish lifestyle that accompanied it seemed for several weeks in dire jeopardy.

A year on, his decision to bare his soul over the incident on a succession of prime-time talk shows appears to have saved his professional skin. Ms Hurley, meanwhile, is said to be earning \$1 million a

year as the new face of Estée Lauder. The mortgage payments should be manageable. *Singer* banned: Donovan Leitch, 50, the Scottish folk singer better known simply as Donovan, has had to scrap an American tour after being denied travel papers because of a drug conviction still on his record after 30 years.

The singer was convicted of using marijuana in England in 1966. The black mark held up his application for a visa waiver at the US Embassy and forced him to cancel a tour promoting his first album in 12 years, according to his Los Angeles record company.

## Rodney King faces jail term

Los Angeles: Rodney King, who was beaten by Los Angeles police five years ago, faces up to a year in jail after a hit-and-run incident in which he ran over his ex-wife in a car (Giles Whittell writes).

Despite being a millionaire and minor celebrity, Mr King has been unable to shake off his troubles with the law. Convicted in the hit-and-run case two weeks ago, he is to be charged with violating his parole terms from an earlier offence. He was awarded \$2.5 million from the City of Los Angeles for his 1991 beating.

## Santas descend on Denmark

FROM KILTER  
IN COPENHAGEN

SIXTY sweating Father Christmases ho-bod their way through Copenhagen yesterday in a parade opening the thirty-third World Santa Claus Congress.

A convoy of veteran fire engines and lorries, led by a brass band thumping out Christmas tunes, drove through the streets behind a clown. The unseasonal Christmas party took on a surreal air as white-bearded Santas jumped from their vehicles to mingle with the crowds, singing Yuletide refrains.

"No joking. Santa is a symbol of peace and goodness. There is not much in this world which brings people together, but Santa unites us," said Skipper, a Santa employed at Denmark's Central Bank during the festive season.

But Santas sweating in July and a host of girl elves did not impress one little boy. "These are not the real Father Christmas," cried Rasmus, aged four.

Later a shoal of Santas was unloaded outside the parliament building for a short visit before the party was rounded off with a bumper Danish

Christmas lunch, washed down with powerful Yule punch.

The week-long congress is being attended by more than 150 Father Christmases from 18 countries. Cyberspace tops the agenda. The world's Santas want to spread their message to the children of the future through computer screens.

"The days when children believed in only one Father Christmas are passing, and children are no longer naive," said Groth Rasmussen, the congress chairman.

Leading article, page 17



IN THE SHORT TERM  
THE NEW  
COMPAQ DESKPRO'S  
PRICE WILL  
SAVE YOU MONEY.



# Sri Lanka carnage as fight at base intensifies

FROM CHRISTOPHER THOMAS IN COLOMBO

THE Sri Lankan Army and Tamil Tigers are locked in one of the greatest slaughters of their civil war, with the combined death toll probably well over 1,000 in six days of fighting.

Both sides continued throwing combatants into battle for control of the strategic garrison of Mullaitivu on the north-east coast yesterday, apparently sustaining appalling casualties on the 13th anniversary of the outbreak of hostilities.

The Tigers have seized part, and perhaps all, of Mullaitivu base. Many of its 1,200 personnel are dead. The Government is determined to take back the garrison to deny the Tigers the claim that they have defeated the Army in a conventional battle, making a mockery of the assertion that the rebels were weak and crumbling.

More troops arriving by sea continued to come under intense artillery and mortar fire

yesterday. The Government insisted the garrison's survivors would be relieved, although the Tigers claimed the reinforcements were pinned down on the beach. One report quoted a Sri Lankan official as saying 22 troops were killed when a rebel shell hit a landing craft.

Communications with the base were knocked out early in the battle, leaving the authorities in Colombo uncertain of the course of the battle. Army officials insisted they still held at least half of the Mullaitivu base.

The battle is crucial to the Tigers' credibility. They must demonstrate their prowess to reassert authority over the Jaffna Tamil population following their humiliating ejection from the Jaffna peninsula late last year and early this year by government forces. The demoralising defeat undermined the Tigers' prestige and threatened to disrupt their enormous international



Sri Lankan police check a car in Colombo yesterday, fearing attacks on the 13th anniversary of the start of hostilities

fundraising operations. Jaffna was run as a Tiger mini-state, with the population subjected to high taxation — a source of funds that has now ended, making foreign fundraising even more crucial.

There is ample evidence of strong-arm tactics being used to force expatriate Tamils to contribute monthly donations. The Tigers have played stock markets in London and elsewhere and have investments

in Tamil-run businesses around the world, especially in the south Indian state of Tamil Nadu, which has 55 million Tamils. The Colombo Government says the rebels are involved in the heroin trade.

The Tigers have offices in 38 countries that raise millions of pounds a year from 450,000 expatriate Sri Lankan Tamils. Britain, Australia, Canada, Italy and Switzerland are key

fundraising centres outside South Asia. The rebels fear their revenues may be hurt by increasing international distaste for the fighters, once viewed almost romantically as the defenders of an oppressed people.

India, once a benefactor, has turned against them, and most countries hosting a 'Tigers' office view the rebels as fanatics who have spurned legitimate peace overtures

from the Government. Sri Lanka has never declared the Tigers an illegal organisation, in the hope of eventually drawing them into the political mainstream. This has made it difficult for foreign governments to close Tiger offices or investigate their affairs, despite calls by Sri Lanka to do so. By some accounts, the rebels raise at least £15 million annually from overseas operations.

## Tigers unleashed by killer whose hero is Napoleon

BY CHRISTOPHER THOMAS

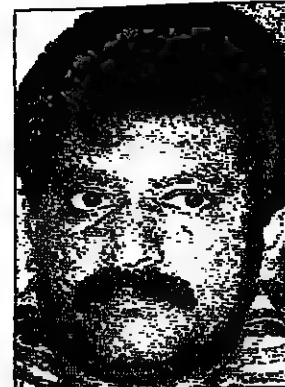
THE spectacular fighting form of the Tamil Tigers in perhaps the bloodiest battle of Sri Lanka's 13-year civil war is the work of one of the world's most deadly terrorists: Velupillai Prabhakaran, a poorly educated Hindu fisherman with a ready smile, a quick wit, a fondness for Clint Eastwood films and an admiration for Napoleon.

Phump, 42, married and a father, he looks anything but what he is: a mass killer, a political fanatic, a manipulator of the national hunger for peace, and probably the sole reason why thousands die almost every year in a conflict going nowhere. He used to immerse himself in sacks of chillis to teach himself to withstand pain in case he was caught and tortured.

He neither drinks nor smokes, expects celibacy from his men unless they are married, and is pitiless with those who fail to follow his orders to the letter. The miracle is that he has not been assassinated, because without him the Tigers would collapse. Anyone around him who might be plotting treachery is killed. For security reasons, he rarely speaks publicly.

The best that can be said of him is that he has not built a personality cult round himself, despite his reputation as a military genius. He confronts a 100,000-strong army with 10,000 fighters, yet has suffered few setbacks and never been captured.

He founded the Tigers in 1972 — the tiger is the traditional symbol of Tamils — in pursuit of a homeland called Eelam (Precious Land) in the north and east of Sri Lanka where most Tamils live. This was perhaps an inevitable outcome of increasing ethnic discrimination and, in particular, crass decisions by two Prime Ministers of the Bandaranaike dynasty — the 1956 declaration that Sinhalese would be the official language, which left Tamil-speakers isolated, and the juggling of regulations in 1971 so that Tamils needed higher marks than the Sinhalese to gain university admission.



Prabhakaran: fond of Clint Eastwood films

halese majority to gain university admission.

Prabhakaran, aged 17 when he and 30 other teenagers announced the formation of the Tigers, was known to friends as Thambiy (little brother). His elusiveness is legendary, despite the Government's readiness to pay generously for his head: once he escaped security forces disguised as a peanut vendor and on another occasion as a priest.

Prabhakaran was born in the village of Valvedditturai into the lowly Karaiyar (fishermen) caste but married into the higher Vellala caste. He met his wife, Madivadani, in 1984 when she and fellow students at Jaffna University went on a hunger strike "unto death" in a protest against discrimination. Prabhakaran and fellow Tigers swept onto the campus and carried the protesters to hospital, where they were forcibly fed, calling the exploit an "idiotic self-sacrifice".

His bitterness was forged early. In 1958, at the age of four, he saw an uncle burnt alive in language riots. He has described his childhood as lonely, especially "in the matter of mingling with girls". His educated father was a government-employed district land officer in Jaffna. "I was brought up in an environment of strict discipline," he recalled.

On another occasion he declared: "I used to read books on the rise of Napoleon and his exploits. This kind of history held special appeal."

## US envoy urges Asean pressure on Burma

FROM A SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT IN JAKARTA

WARREN CHRISTOPHER, the American Secretary of State, gave a warning yesterday of possible global consequences if pressure was not put on the Burmese military junta to introduce democracy.

Speaking at the third Association of South-East Asian Nations regional forum, Mr Christopher urged it to "consider the impact of current conditions in Burma on the region". The refusal of Burmese leaders "to heed the desires of a majority of people for a transition to democratic rule, and its increased harassment of the democratic opposition, not only violates basic universal human rights, but raises the chance of instability, bloodshed and migration within Burma and across its borders," he said.

"The steady deterioration of the rule of law has increased the threat that Burma's burgeoning drug trade poses to citizens from Bangkok to Berlin, Shanghai to San Francisco," he added. The United States, which has already stopped foreign aid and weapons sales to Burma, is considering, like the European Union, imposing sanctions.

Asean denies it is blind to the political situation in Burma, but prefers change through "constructive engagement". Burma may become a member in 1998, Asean officials said.

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Asean denies it is blind to the political situation in Burma, but prefers change through "constructive engagement". Burma may become a member in 1998, Asean officials said.



## Phone sex outrages islanders

Suva, Fiji: Tuvalu's national church is outraged that the tiny central Pacific island has boosted government revenue 10 per cent by leasing its international telephone code for phone sex services.

"If it is true, then this is the most degrading thing that has ever happened to Tuvalu," said the Rev Rosette Alefaio, of the Ekalesia Kelisiano. He had received pages from the magazine *Men Only* displaying advertisements offering sex conversation to callers who dial a number prefixed by Tuvalu's code, 688. (AP)

## Charges ready in Abiola killing

Lagos: Nigerian police are to charge unnamed senior opposition figures with conspiracy in the murder of the wife of Moshood Abiola, the detained opposition leader, a police spokesman said. Mrs Abiola, vocal in support of her husband, was shot in Lagos on June 4. The police have held Abraham Adesanya, 74, Ayo Adebajo and Ganiyu Dawodu, all National Democratic Coalition figures, since last month. (Reuters)

## Filipinos face gold charges

Sydney: Two Filipino men, one calling himself a sultan and another a prince, were charged with trying to sell 50,000 tonnes of gold bullion they did not have. Hatij Rodinood Sultan Karim, 39, and Datu Mohammed Kad-hur Karim, 48, were charged with two counts of fraud in the Surfers Paradise magistrates' court in Queensland. (Reuters)

## Deadly bait

Tirana: An Albanian fisherman who sought a bumper catch by dropping a Second World War bomb into the sea was killed when it blew up while he was handling it in the port of Vlora. (Reuters)

## NORTHERN ROCK BUILDING SOCIETY

### Highlights of the Interim Report for 6 months ended 30th June 1996

- Assets now £12.9 billion — up by 12% compared with 31 December 1995.
- Pre tax profits up to £86 million — an increase of 16% compared with the 6 month period ended 30 June 1995.
- Net lending of £1.2 billion — an increase of 77% compared with the 6 month period ended 30 June 1995. This represents a market share of around 16% of the UK mortgage market.
- Reduction in Administrative Expense to Income Ratio to 31.5% compared with 32.5% for the 6 month period ended 30 June 1995.
- Reduction in Administrative Expense Ratio to 0.74 compared with 0.77 per £100 of mean assets for the 6 month period ended 30 June 1995.
- Arrears cases of one month and over reduced by 22% compared with arrears at 30 June 1995.

	6 months to 30 June 96 (Unaudited)	6 months to 30 June 95 (Unaudited)	12 months to 31 December 95 (Audited)
Net interest receivable	120.4	96.8	208.2
Other income & charges	22.3	22.3	41.0
Total income	142.7	119.1	249.2
Administrative expenses - recurring	(45.0)	(39.9)	(83.5)
- non-recurring	(2.0)	-	-
Provisions for bad and doubtful debts	(9.7)	(8.8)	(18.7)
Profit on ordinary activities before tax	86.0	70.4	147.0
Tax on profit on ordinary activities	(29.0)	(24.3)	(49.2)
Profit for the period	57.0	46.1	97.8
Total Assets	12,896.3	10,733.9	11,559.1
Gross lending	1,601	1,086	2,277
Net retail receipts	302	301	560
Net non-retail receipts	824	302	572

There have been no recognised gains or losses other than the profit for the periods under review.

### Statement from the Managing Director

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Managing Director



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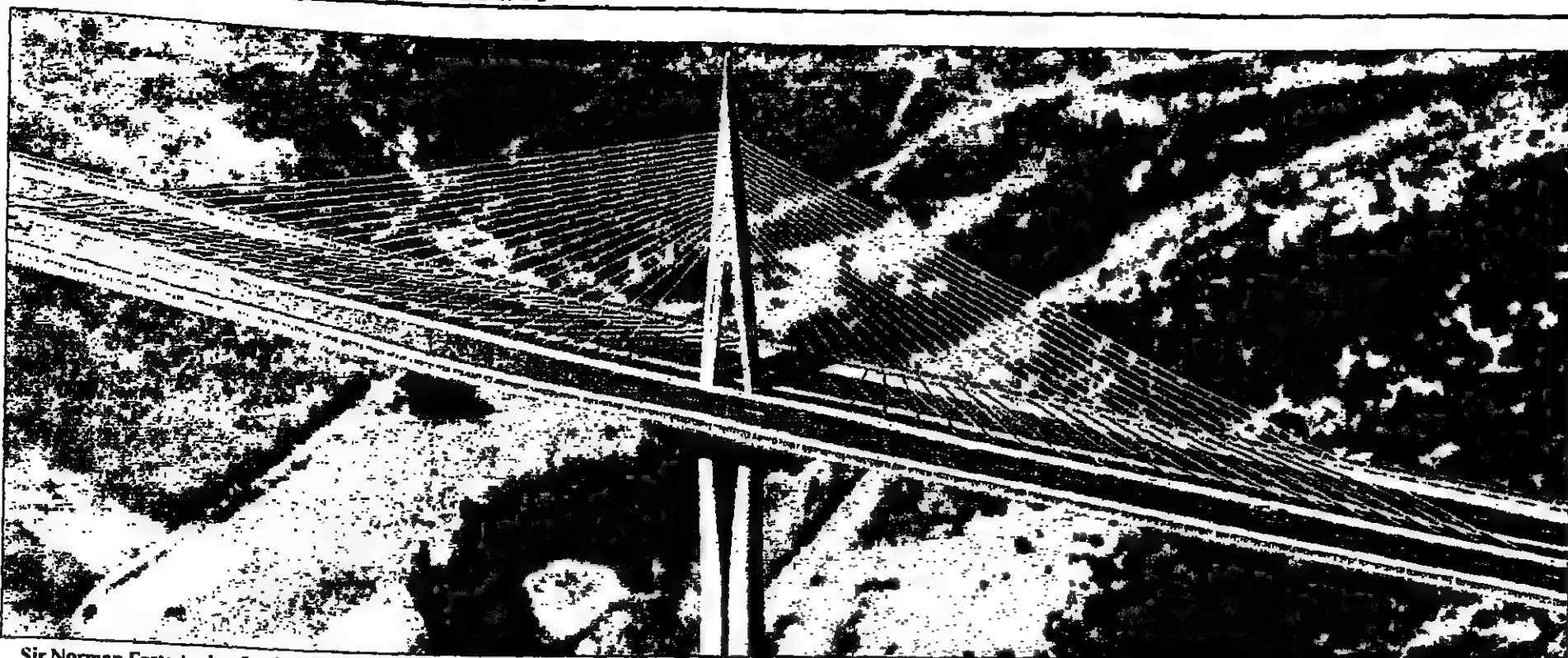
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Sir Norman Foster's plan for the Millau viaduct over the valley of the Tarn has outraged some French critics, who have called it a "triumph for technical thinking over cultural thinking"

## Briton's viaduct raises French storm

FROM BEN MACINTYRE  
IN PARIS

THE British architect Sir Norman Foster has won a competition to design a vast viaduct in southwestern France, sparking protests from rivals and critics who say that his immense structure will "scar one of the most beautiful parts of the French countryside".

The Millau viaduct, named after the town in the Aveyron region which lies at one end of the planned structure, will eventually stretch 1.5 miles above the great valley of the Tarn, completing the high-speed A75 autoroute linking Clermont-Ferrand in central France with Beziers on the Mediterranean coast. At its centre, the viaduct's pillars will tower 1,130ft above the ground, 100ft higher than the Eiffel Tower.

Described as the world's largest terres-

trial work of art, the viaduct will offer motorists breathtaking views as they drive between the two cliffs known as the Causse Rouge and the Causse Noir (the red and black limestone plateaux), but the design has been attacked as brutal and inappropriate.

"Is it really necessary?" the newspaper *Le Figaro* asked yesterday, describing the project as a "mastodon" that would cost at least £1.5 billion (£200 million) and create a "vast net of pylons" scarring the valley.

"This building is a nonsense, resulting from a poor analysis of the site," Francis Rambert wrote. M Rambert accused Sir Norman of failing to take the geography of the region into sufficient account, saying that the Romans or Eiffel "would have understood it better".

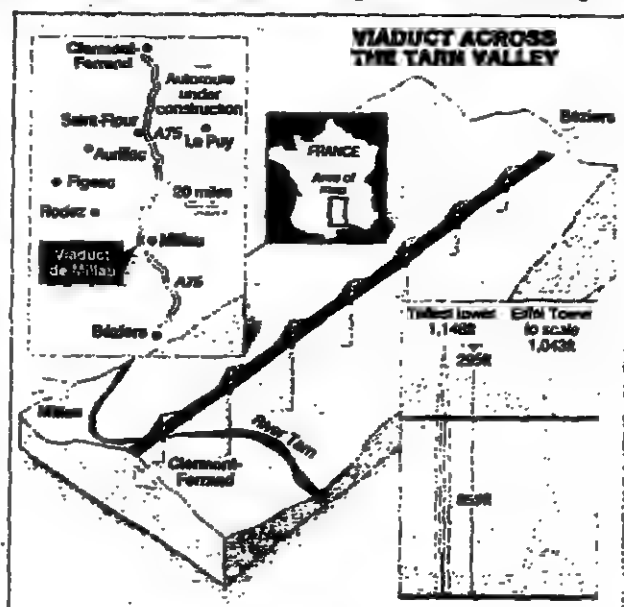
Sir Norman, who is also working on the British Museum and the Reichstag in

Berlin, was one of 30 architects to submit plans for the viaduct. The competition was launched in 1993 and this month a jury of French architects, engineers and politicians debated the entrants for 48 hours before arriving at a shortlist of five designs.

"The jury chose the most glaring solution for the countryside," complained *Le Figaro*, describing Sir Norman's design as a "grand triumph for technical thinking over cultural thinking".

Others, however, have taken a different view. Christophe Cathala, of *Dépêche du Midi*, the local newspaper, described the Foster design as the most fluid, with a "purity of line that fits in well with the countryside".

The Foster viaduct will be built of concrete, with the sides of the roadway built on the model of aircraft wings to withstand the battering of high winds.



## Peace hopes revive as Likud minister has talks with Arafat

FROM CHRISTOPHER WALKER IN JERUSALEM

YASSIR ARAFAT, President of the Palestinian Authority, held a successful first meeting at ministerial level with Israel's Likud Government yesterday, reviving hopes for peace in the Middle East.

The 90-minute encounter at the crossing-point between Israel and the Gaza Strip between Mr Arafat and David Levy, the Foreign Minister, was seen as confirming the pragmatism of Benjamin Netanyahu's Government. He won unexpected praise in Cairo last week when he met President Mubarak for the first time.

Mr Arafat, who is still regarded as a "war criminal" by some members of the Likud Cabinet, said after the meeting: "These contacts will continue at all levels, so that we can move the peace process forward at all levels."

Mr Arafat also disclosed that he had sent a personal greeting to Mr Netanyahu, although the Israeli Prime Minister has so far refused to meet the PLO chief. A Netanyahu-Arafat meeting is now expected within a month or two, according to Israeli political sources.

Mr Levy, who recently threatened to resign unless Ariel Sharon, a leading Likud

hawk, was found a top Cabinet post, also spoke positively. "We decided to formalise our relations and to create the proper frameworks for examining the issues and advancing them," he said.

Diplomatic observers said that the significance of the meeting for the Likud Party, which for the past 20 years has demonised Mr Arafat as a murderer and denounced political rivals for talking to him, could not be overestimated.

Hemi Shalev, chief com-



Arafat and Levy after their talks yesterday

mentator for the daily *Maariv*, wrote: "The meeting signals clearly that the new Israeli Government really intends to maintain the obligations undertaken by its predecessor."

As expected, the meeting did not lead to specific agreements on the many outstanding issues between Israel and the Palestinian Authority. But Mr Netanyahu said that his Government would decide this weekend about how to proceed with the long-delayed withdrawal from most of Hebron, the last West Bank city still controlled by Israeli soldiers.

According to sources close to the Government, a compromise decision accepting much of the withdrawal scheme agreed by the previous Labour Government will be announced, with the addition of extra security for the Jewish settlers who will remain.

Mr Netanyahu described yesterday's talks as "significant in establishing dialogue between Israel and the Palestinians".

The meeting was accompanied by other signals of a thaw, including the start of the promised lifting of a ban on permits enabling Palestinians from Gaza to work in Israel.

Leading article, page 17

## Adriatic sharks cause ban on bathers

BY FRANCESCO BONGARRA

TOURISTS in the Adriatic have been driven from the sea by sharks. Coastguard boats have been patrolling the 30-mile Trieste coast and warning bathers to stay out of the water since three sharks were seen on Sunday. Police and lifeguards stop any swimmer who defies the warning.

The alert started when the crew of a regatta boat spotted three sharks which they said were at least 10ft long. The regatta was immediately cancelled.

Experts said sharks were seldom seen in the Adriatic. Although they can be aggressive towards swimmers, documented cases of attacks on humans are extremely rare.

However, Paolo Muner, the harbourmaster in the port of Trieste, said it was not unusual in summer to see blue sharks, which can grow up to 13ft long. Blue sharks are usually found near the surface in warm waters and feed voraciously on fish, squid and other sharks.

"The danger flags are still flying and it is up to the individual beach operators when they decide to let people back into the sea," Signor Muner said. He added that some beaches had also been closed in neighbouring Slovenia.

## Eta mastermind held in swoop by French police

BY TINKU VARADARAJAN IN MADRID  
AND OUR FOREIGN STAFF

THE Basque separatist group Eta has suffered a serious setback with the arrest by French police yesterday of Julian Acurra Egurola, alias Pototo, believed to be one of the three members of Eta's high command.

Acurra was arrested in a dawn swoop by heavily armed gendarmes at a farmhouse in Lasseube, near Pau, southwest France. About 30 police found a cache of arms including an anti-tank rocket, sub-machineguns, grenades and detonators in the farmhouse, along with electronic address books and an Eta seal.

His detention is a welcome boost for the Spanish Government in its war against Eta, which yesterday seriously injured a Portuguese citizen, Albino Machado Pires, 35, in a car bomb in San Sebastian. It is believed Senhor Machado, who may lose both legs, was targeted because he once worked as a cook for the Spanish Civil Guard.

He had been alerted by police after his name, a description of his car and indications of where he parked it were found on a list of Eta targets discovered by the police last March when they arrested an alleged Eta murderer, Acurra, who is among the most wanted of Eta's members, is the group's un-

questioned arms and logistics mastermind. His arrest is the fruit of an unprecedented close partnership between Paris and Madrid that has already led to high-level anti-terrorist agreements between the French and Spanish Governments.

The French Interior Minister, Jean Louis Debré, has met his counterpart, Jaime Mayor Oreja, several times, and the two are said by close observers to enjoy "a total meeting of minds on the terrorist threat from Eta". M Debré is believed to be "very favourably inclined" towards granting Spanish police a limited right of hot pursuit of Eta guerrillas into France.

Acurra, known to have committed two murders himself in 1986, has been responsible for innumerable orders to kill, bomb and maim. In 1994, a Paris court sentenced him *in absentia* to eight years in prison.

Spanish security forces are preparing themselves for an aggressive Eta response to Acurra's capture. The Basque group invariably retaliates after a member's arrest with violence against the Civil Guard. This time Eta's response could extend to tourists, as part of its summer campaign to disrupt the Spanish industry.

## UN diggers start to uncover 'biggest mass grave' in Bosnia

FROM STACY SULLIVAN  
IN SARAJEVO

INVESTIGATORS from the United Nations War Crimes Tribunal began digging up a meadow that is suspected to be the biggest mass grave in eastern Bosnia in their continued effort to uncover evidence of the slaughter of Bosnian Muslims when Serb forces overran the UN-declared

"safe area" of Srebrenica a year ago. Unlike other sites which have been in isolated areas, this grave, known as Nova Kasaba, sits on the edge of the main road, about 12 miles northwest of Srebrenica.

American intelligence sources have estimated the grave contains the bodies of between 1,550 to 2,700 Muslim men, who were killed as they tried to escape the advancing Bosni-

an Serb Army. Investigators estimate the number of bodies to be in the hundreds.

Because its proximity to the main road makes the excavations much more visible to the Serb population, which has thus far insisted the grave sites contain the bodies of soldiers killed in fighting, UN investigators and Nato soldiers from the peace implementation force in Bosnia fear

resentful Serbs are more likely to harass investigators. US troops posted an anti-sniper unit round the site and have lined the busy road with Bradley fighting vehicles. Troops have been given orders to ignore residents who shout abuse or make obscene gestures at them.

The team of 20 investigators at Nova Kasaba uncovered three corpses on Monday as they dug

trenches round the site to mark the boundaries of the grave. One body was attached to a shoe poking out of the earth. In a vast dig earlier this month, investigators found six bodies - two with their hands bound behind their backs, one with a crushed skull and two others with bullet holes in their heads. Last week investigators uncovered 154 corpses from a grave near Cerska.

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## 14 STYLE

# Army manoeuvres for the autumn

The maxi-coat, fur collar and brogues that make up this autumn's essential look are already moving from the catwalks to the high street, says Grace Bradberry



It's the height of summer, temperatures are in the 80s, but the truly stylish woman should be thinking about autumn. Does this sound mad? Think again. After the August holiday rush, most of us will return to find temperatures taking a sudden dive, and shops plunged into autumnal mood. And most of us will not have a clue what to buy.

The temptation is to put off shopping until the chill really begins to bite, but this is often a mistake: sizes go out of stock, the best pieces disappear altogether. The important thing is to know what to buy and to buy it early.

To help with this, the August editions of the glossies are, as usual, full of pictures from the designers' autumn/winter shows. But not all the "looks" are practical for a woman seeking investment buys for the office. Clashing patterns, catsuits and long cardigans are just three of the trends that will pass muster in fashionable restaurants and clubs, but few other places.

But there are several pieces that look set to make a successful transition from the catwalk. The maxi-coat, the military-style suit and brogue shoes or boots have emerged

as the three "must-haves" for the autumn (thankfully, the brogues are in a court-shoe style rather than the leg). The key accessory is a detachable fur collar, slung over a coat or worn over a sheer blouse.

Overall, the idea is to look faintly Seventies and bohemian, preferably both at once.

**The idea is to look faintly Seventies and bohemian**

The fashion industry has been trying to persuade us to give up black for several seasons now, and by a process of attrition they have gradually succeeded in making it look a bit old hat.

This autumn comes the big push: designers have finally come up with base col-

ours that are actually wearable. As Kim Stringer, associate fashion director of *Elle*, says: "Black is no longer the building block. For next season chocolate brown is a great colour, and so is khaki in small doses. Burgundy and maroon are also very flattering."

According to Ms Stringer, certain outfits make an instant impression on the catwalk, and are just bound to filter down the fashion chain. "If I'm looking at the Versace show and seeing the military coat, I know it will work. By the time the high street store



has got hold of it, it's really quite different. But the gilt buttons and the belts will still be there, as well as similar proportions and colours."

The result will be nothing like the real thing — as Ms Stringer is careful to point out — but it will reflect the general direction that fashion is taking.

Beyond the obvious criteria of cut, colour and quality, there are key points to look out for this autumn. Texture is important. Several designers used leather and suede for their maxi-coats. If this seems both extravagant and impractical, then look for interesting wool mixes like the one used in the Jaeger coat pictured.

Wide lapels are the most important detail for jackets. Without them, a military style will look like army surplus. With them, it will have an impact not seen since the power-dressing of the Eighties.

But blocked shoulders and ripped-in waists have not made a return. Look for long, lean lines and simple tailoring which will really show up the details to good effect. As always, there are a lot of trouser suits around, and the best shape is one that flares out at the bottom. Ideally the trouser legs should be slightly cropped, rather than skimming the shoes.



TOP FAR LEFT: Catwalk originals from Kitzia (left) and Isabella (photographs, CHRIS MOORE)

TOP CENTRE: Aubergine belted mélange coat, £440; bayleaf merino wool dress, £129, Jaeger, selected branches (0171-200 4000). Fake fur detachable collar, £55, Jackson, Selfridges, W1 (0171-792 8336). Ankle boots (also above left), £59.99, Ravel, selected branches (0171-631 0224)

ABOVE RIGHT: Khaki crêpe double-breasted jacket, £175; matching trousers, £110, Whistles, 12 St Christopher's Place, W1 (0171-730 9819)

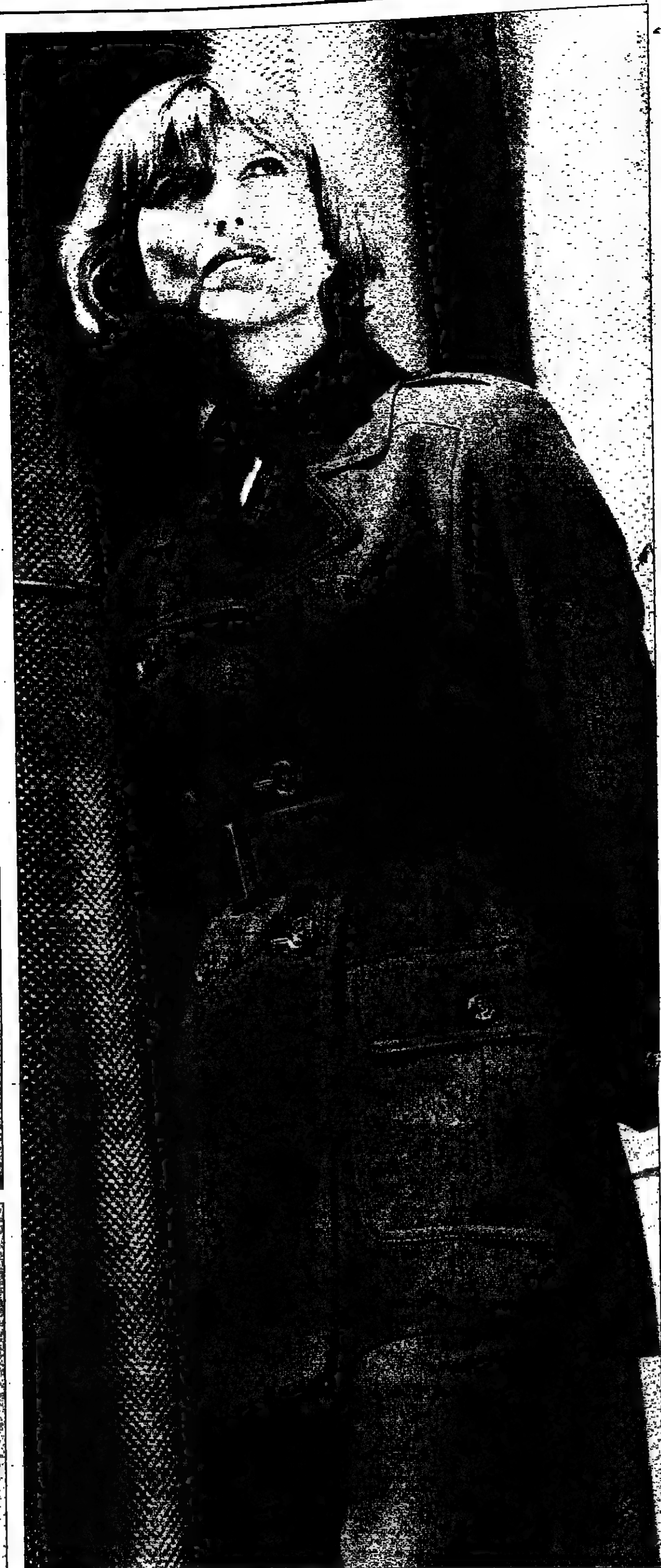
Photographs by CHRIS HARRIS. Hair and make-up by Alex Babsky. Styling by Amandip Upal

In general, avoid coats with fur trims that are attached — separate fake fur accessories slung over the top are not only more versatile but also more

fashionable. The collar shown here also comes in a deep red.

Though all this advice may sound prescriptive, this is actually a good season for

experimenting. "It's all about mixing everything up," says Kim Stringer. "It's a Seventies-inspired thing of freedom of expression."



REAL PEOPLE, REAL CLOTHES

CAMILLA Leigh-Pemberton (above), 32, has run her own party-planning company, Fait Accompli, for the last ten years. Her wardrobe is full of little black dresses, chosen so she can fade into the background when working, and shortish skirts. "I don't know why, but I never wear long skirts. In some ways, I'm incredibly square about clothes," she admits. She was quite taken with the maxi-coat and fake-fur trim, but not so sure about the brogue boots: "Will people really wear these?"



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## Four protective lipsticks tried and tested

FOR years, cosmetic companies have been promising lip products that will stay on, define the lips well, and protect them from becoming chapped. Guerlain has just launched its new Kisskiss Hydro-soft range in 24 shades and claims, of course, that this is the ultimate product. We put it to the test, along with three others.

■ GUERLAIN KISSKISS HYDRO-SOFT SPF8, £14, 24 shades.

Did it moisturise? Lips remained moist for several hours; score 9/10. Long-lasting colour? Despite being slightly transparent, it managed to stay put. We tested a deep red shade, but the colour worked well as both a subtle stain and a complete lip colour. 9. Total score: 18/20.

■ CLINIQUE SUN BUFFER LIPSTICK SPF15, £10, five shades.

Did it moisturise? Fairly good at keeping the lips moist. Also claims to be waterproof, and is PABA-free which is a preservative people can be allergic to; 8/10. Long-lasting colour? A sheer, fairly long-lasting lipstick, it left a film of transparent colour rather than defining the lips; 7/10. Total score: 15/20.

■ COLOURINGS SPF30, £3.75, Body Shop, four colours.

Did it moisturise? Kept lips moist for only a short while which would mean having to constantly reapply; 4/10. Long-lasting colour? The lipstick has a unique design with a core of concentrated sunblock running down the middle of the lipstick. Looks impressive, but though the initial result was luminous and glossy, the colour didn't last very long; 5/10. Total score: 9/20.

■ ELIZABETH ARDEN SUN SHADE SPF15, £12, three colours.

As a more sheer lipstick this one worked well at keeping lips soft; 6/10. Long-lasting colour? The glossiest lipstick tested, it was not as long-

lasting as the Guerlain and was more effective as a protective stain than a full-on lip colour. Needed to be reapplied to maintain its richness; 5/10. Total score: 11/20.

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# The naked and the dead boring

A new West End rock musical owes more to pornography than to art

On Monday evening a new show, *Voyeurz*, opened in London's West End. The walls of the Whitehall Theatre display a poster of a man crouched in the posture of an arthritic tarantula. He appears to be salivating over the upper regions of a woman's thigh. "Satisfy your curiosity" challenges a red neon sign above the entrance. I joined the throng of people who had arrived in search of satiation, presumably.

A rock musical, *Voyeurz* has sold itself on promises of libidinous lesbians and simulated sex. Outside on the pavement I found myself among a motley crowd. There was a man with a leather harness round his chest, not unlike that which my great aunt uses for taking her unruly beagle for a walk. Peter Stringfellow's girlfriend was there, too, appropriately garbed in transparent plastic with three red dots over the most vital areas. And I saw the proverbial man in a mac. But it turned out to be Richard Harris — and his mac was clean.

As the show begins you are left in no doubt that you have strayed beyond the boundaries of Barbara Cartland romance. Even as the curtain rises you are inside the bedroom. Dancers writhe in knickerbockers and vests, managing to look not unlike Form 3a from the local primary school miming their version of gas in the trenches. The show rolls, downhill, from then on, its plot is banal, its lyrics ludicrous and its wit absent. Several members of the audience, shocked by cliché, left half-way through.

It is true there were enough buttocks to please the most demanding pygophilic and pelvic thrusts of a vigour to make the Green Goddess proud. Flurries of fetishistic aids were brandished amid excesses of exotic underwear. But as nudity followed semi-nudity in swift succession, people no longer even bothered to lean forward in their seats. The simulated sex was less erotic — and only marginally less embarrassing — than watching the vicar's Jack Russell mounting the postmistress's spaniel at a village fete.

When all was over, bar the

disappointment, the only enthusiast I could find was Michael whose silver and red striped nail varnish matched — as he eagerly pointed out — the colour of his hair. "I work in the torture garden of a sadomasochistic club," he went on to inform me winningly. "There is a stagnation in the fetish scene at the moment. With this show, business will pick up again." He planted a kiss on my shoulder before scuttling off. "Sorry, got to get away now," he said. "My cats Katy and Husky will be missing me."

I wandered through Soho on my way home. "Erotica", on the corner of Dean Street, blazoned the tacky temptations of a "live show". Pole dancing was on offer at an Old Compton Street venue. Call-girl cards littered the streets: "Busy model", "Correction given", "Let me spank you".

There seemed little distinction between this world and the one from which I had emerged. The dividing line between art and pornography is often blurred. Caravaggio's *Amor Vincit Omnia*, portrays a cherub, legs shamelessly ascribed. Owned by the Marchese Vincenzo Giustiniani, it was hung behind a green silk curtain, ostensibly because it would outshine all the other paintings in his collection. But he and his brother, Cardinal Benedetto, would probably pass by from time to time and draw back the drapery for a lascivious look. Fragonard's *The Swing* proffers a titillating peek up a woman's petticoats and Lord Leighton's *Bath of Psyche* seems deliberately designed to stir Victorian lusts.

Pornography can be beautiful.

The work of Aubrey Beardsley or Thomas Rowlandson, enjoying the status of fine art. Pirelli calendars have become a collector's item. The idealisations of artful pornography play on the seductive side of sexuality. Their exquisite sense of control can be teasingly sensual. Manet's *Olympia*, reclined in composed perfection, stares forth from the canvas with erotic challenge.

It is when reality invades the fantasy that eroticism seeps away. The nudes of Lucian Freud, for example, their flesh united with a visceral sheen, sprawl like dead meat on a slab. They evince the same queasy response as a girl in a Soho sex show.

Although admittedly curious I have never dared go to one of these shows. Stories of belligerent bouncers and Broddingnagian bills have scared me away. But a friend told me of one rite of passage trip. A naked girl with the emaciated body and punctured veins of a junkie, squirmed dispassionately on a grubby camp-bed. It was the hard yellowed skin of her feet that he most remembered.

"It reminded me why sex and death are always supposed to be linked," he said. It is this uncomfortable closeness which Luis Buñuel captures in *Un Chien Andalou* with an image of a man caressing a woman's breasts as his face changes into a death mask. That a woman should be driven by addiction to earn her living in a lewd peepshow seems painfully exploitative. Suddenly, curiosity collapses into compassion.

*Voyeurz*, of course, is not this extreme. Though most of its cast is

female, the two expressionless but well-endowed men appear at least as ridiculous as the women. And they did all choose to take part.

But the stage is a notoriously precarious profession. For a young actor or actress, struggling to make ends meet, it would take the courage of very strong convictions to turn down any West End part. It is depressing that *Voyeurz* should have offered them such tawdry theatre for their talents.

Last Sunday I watched a documentary celebrating 25 years of "Page 3 Girls". Several of the former models declared that they wished they had never posed naked. Attracted, naively, by the sparkle of celebrity, almost none had gone on, as they had hoped, to careers in modelling or on the stage. It was only after she had had her first son and watched him breastfeed, said one of the girls, that she had realised how mercifully her breast-baring past had been. It was a poignant emotion, even more so when juxtaposed against the opinions of an editor. He discussed the girls as commodities. He chose them because they seemed the right shape for a four-column picture.

Michael White, the producer of *Voyeurz*, has several successes to his name. He could have worked to produce a far more worthwhile show for young aspirant dancers to appear in — one which they need never feel embarrassed about in later years. Instead he has relied on tawdry titillation in a piece of theatre which, in its desire to shock, has cast most craftsmanship and art aside.

In the end it is up to audiences whether they will ratify this decision. As I reached home, I passed the prostitute who plies her trade on the corner of my street. She is something of a landmark in the area. "Turn left by the blonde," people say when giving directions. "You're late Rachel, had a good night?" she asked. "Not really... and you?" "Yeah, great," she said, parting her purse. The idea of a good night out can mean very different things to different people.



RACHEL CAMPBELL-JOHNSTON



Chris Minna, LaLa and L.D. thrust their pelvises with vigour among excesses of erotic underwear

Joseph Connolly, sans luggage, reports on lapel-pin swapping in Atlanta

## Even the politeness makes you sweat

Well, here I am in Atlanta, Georgia — and it's bloody hot.

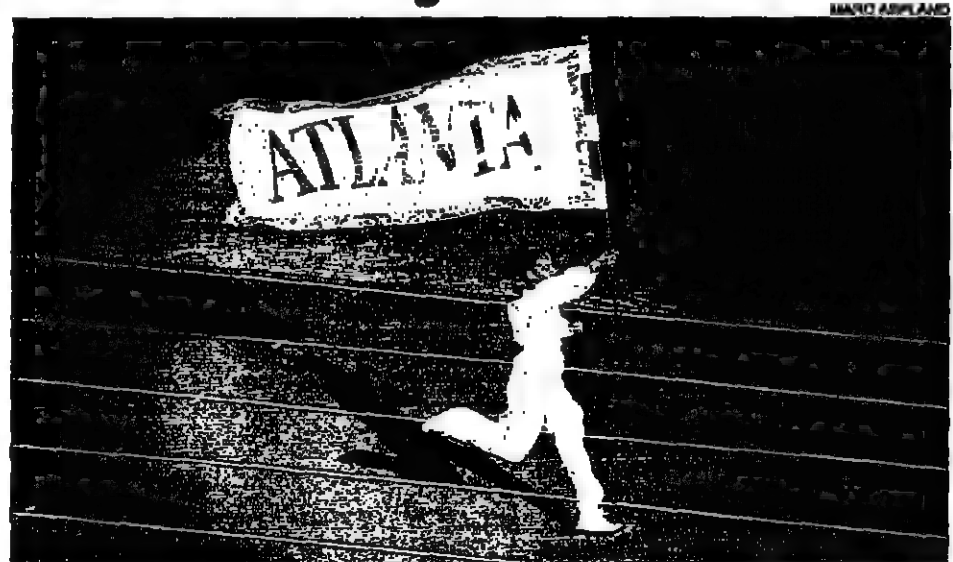
Actually, what makes you sweat is not so much the heat as the politeness. Politeness here is a sort of competition, with points for staying power under duress. Longevity of smile and profusion of courtesies.

People are falling over each other to thank you, apologise and thank you again. I rather like it. For once you don't feel a prat for being nice and British: open a door for a lady and she is grateful and she smiles for God's sake.

Perfect strangers hail you in the mall and say "How are you?" with a depth of solicitude seldom encountered among one's nearest and dearest. And because one is conditioned to answer questions when addressed, one finds oneself saying: "Well, not too bad, actually, all things considered, thanks for asking — had the makings of a cold at the beginning of the week, but it seems to be OK now — cat's looking pesky but fey, who's complaining?"

Whereupon they don't look at you as if you've just escaped from somewhere best not discussed — they say: "I'm really pleased/sorry to hear that" and they really do appear so. In shops they say: "Now you'll be sure to come back and see us soon, you hear?" (Yeah, they really do say "you'll" — with no trace of irony) and you think: I really want to show this man pictures of my children, and maybe we could get together one Christmas and make a real go of it.

But let me tell you why I'm here. I'm here for the Olympic Games, courtesy of those terribly nice people at Swatch. It's a curious thing, corporate hospitality. It's all about mak-



All the yelling and flag-waving of the opening ceremony was carefully choreographed

ing you feel special when deep down everyone (especially you) knows that you're not. Swatch is the official time-keeper for the Games, and what it doesn't know about corporate hospitality ain't worth a damn, my dear (*Gone With the Wind* was written in Atlanta). My suite at the hotel, I have to say, is beautiful, and roughly the size of Reading.

Let me tell you about the opening ceremony. Did you watch it on TV? Three-and-a-half billion people tuned in live, we were told (God knows how many corpses), which I guess makes me kinda famous, boy. All the yelling and flag-waving was carefully choreographed, you know. We were all sitting there for a

couple of hours in the 96-degree cool of the evening, and a very nice white man and an equally pleasant black lady alternated in giving us instructions so detailed that many passed out under the strain of it all.

Some British hacks, faced with the attendant headache of trying to remember just when to bark out "Welcome", flash one's flashlight or wave one's hanky, could cope only by way of copious Anadin washed down by a vase of Coke (they think big in Georgia: this is always on my mind). I couldn't get the hang of it at all because they were also telling us to drink loads

of "Quids": I tell you they lost my luggage? Yeah, I've just heard (three days later) that it's in Dallas. My suitcase is better travelled than I am — I've never been to Texas. I'm going to eat now: I could go to the "Lettuce Ouprise You" joint downtown, but I feel inclined to plump for Bone's Steakhouse which claims: "We give not only fine beef, but our hearts as well".

PS. Luggage hasn't turned up. Was last sighted in Fort Worth, heading south. My wife phoned last night, apparently. "Oh yeah," the girl said. "You want the man with no clothes? It's not easy is it? And it's bloody hot."

shower in the privacy of your personal asylum.

Even President Clinton at one point (the point you'd expect — when Martin Luther King's greatest hit speech was tarred to the masses) appeared overcome. According to *USA Today*, he was "tearing up" (not pronounced as you might expect — think weepy).

Anyway, there was buckets of enthusiasm: Peter Fonda was cool (his torso is one foot long and his legs comprise the other five) and Spike Lee was shouting: "Just one photograph, and that's it!" (He was saying this for ages). And people were eagerly swapping lapel pins. Yeah, lapel pins. They cover their luminous long shorts, sweatpants, sweatshirts, baseball-cap sweatbands (any number of sweaty things) with these little enamel badges that are a sort of divine and potent mission in these parts. People have been forcibly relieved of their lapel pins, a policeman was telling me, by the straightforward expedient of blowing their heads off with a Magnum and moving on.

Did I tell you they lost my luggage? Yeah, I've just heard (three days later) that it's in Dallas. My suitcase is better travelled than I am — I've never been to Texas. I'm going to eat now: I could go to the "Lettuce Ouprise You" joint downtown, but I feel inclined to plump for Bone's Steakhouse which claims: "We give not only fine beef, but our hearts as well".

John Goodbody, page 23

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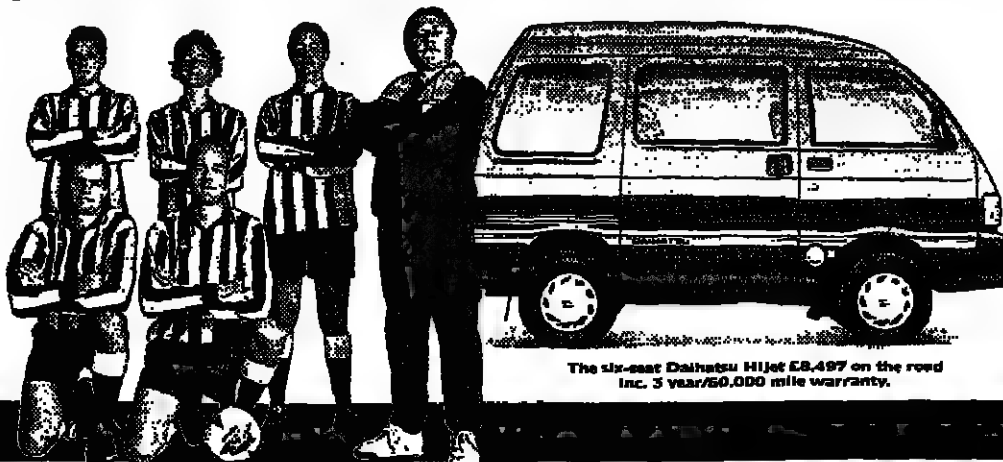
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## Alan Coren



### Just a mo: what's le mot juste for this Frenchman's toes?

I cannot remember the word for toe. No, no, of course not that word for toe, you can see I have remembered that, what I cannot remember is the French word for toe. I am standing here on the Antilles beach, on my own ten toes, and staring down at them as if, I don't know, the shape of them, the disposition, the way I am wiggling them, will somehow jog the memory. I have even gone so far as to hurdle down the arches of the years to fetch up at a blackboard on which Eirlys Thomas, MA (Cardiff) is doing parts of the body. How about that?

I can go back 40 years to dredge up my French teacher's Christian name, her *alma mater*, but not her word for toe. Look, she has drawn a mannikin on the board, and I can see her point to his *genou*, descend her chalk and point to his *piéd*, but when her chalk gets to the end of his *piéd* — nothing.

You are a caring readership, I know, and you will have become concerned about all this. Has he, you fret, hurt his toe in some way, had a crab on the end of it, trod on something, trod in something, got it sunburnt, found a verruca under it, and does he now need to communicate this to the local emergency services? No (but thank you for asking) it is none of these. This is not about the toes I am standing on, it is about the toes the man over there by the beach-bar is standing on; because while I, as you have heard, am standing on ten, he is standing on 12.

Do not stare at them. That is the mistake I made. I came out of the sea a few minutes ago, and because the sea was the Mediterranean one — do you know the French for drain, by the way? It is *l'égoût* — the first thing I did was rush under the beach shower before ten billion bacteria could unpack and go to work. That there was already someone under it did not matter. We are a friendly lot on this beach, not to say so commendably post-sexist that I have often shared a douche with those of a differently topless persuasion, but on this occasion I did not have to be circumspect, even with my eyes. Would that I had: for, as I glanced down, I saw that, beneath me, there were 22 toes, and, God help me, I looked up at him, and then looked down again, and, worst of all, looked down long enough for him to have no doubt at all about what I was now doing. I was counting. Just to make sure. Then I looked up again, and caught his eye — not difficult, it was watching me like a CCTV camera — and he grinned, and shrugged, and, after a moment or two, walked out of the douche and, smoothing his hair back, towards the bar.

After a bit, I walked out of it myself. I wanted a drink, too, but more than that, I wanted to apologise. In truth, I couldn't get a drink without apologising: I could not follow a 12-toed man to a bar when our only previous social contact had been my shameless preoccupation with his pedal quick. But the word for toe has gone. I know I had it once, but I do not have it now, and without it, how can I apologise? A general apology will not do, because his natural response will surely be to ask me what I am apologising for, and I am unable to tell him that I am apologising for staring at his toes. That I know the word for feet (see above) does not help; by apologising for staring at his feet, I shall seem to be studiously avoiding mentioning his toes. I cannot, since you ask, just stroll over to the bar, smile, and say nothing. This man knows I am interested in his toes. He may even think I do not want a drink at all. I want only to have another sly shufti at his round dozen.

I know what you're going to suggest. You're going to suggest that I go up to someone else on the beach and ask them what the word for toe is. Thanks. You realise what that would involve? It would involve pointing at my own toe. And suppose the man at the bar saw me doing that, and talking, and then, as one does, smiling, laughing even? The only safe course of action would be to get changed, go into town, find a bookshop, look up the word for toe, come back, strip again, and then go up to him. Fine. Even if he had not by then gone, he would no longer be at the bar. I should have to find him wherever he was, leaving him to conclude that I was not merely interested in his bloody toes. I was obsessed by them. I do not know what to do. This is a tricky situation. Really tricky.



"SIXTY FOUR THOUSAND TWO HUNDRED AND TWELVE, SIXTY FOUR THOUSAND TWO HUNDRED AND THIRTEEN...."

# Blair's cap doesn't fit

For all its promises to restore local government, Labour has become as centralist as the Conservatives

Something strange comes over Tony Blair when he talks about local government. He gazes down at his boots or up at the ceiling. The sentence-with-a-smile begins as usual, with the tightening of the upper lip and downward chop of the hand. Then he gets to the awkward bit. There is a telltale moment of hesitancy. The voice falls an octave. The vessel words are raced out and he quickly returns to balmy platitude.

As Mr Blair battles through today's Shadow Cabinet elections, the taproom gossip is about the awful things the parliamentary Left has in store for him in government. Watch Mr Livingstone or Mr Flynn or Ms Abbott, we are told. Watch for the first Cabinet walkouts, Clare Short perhaps, or Margaret Beckett or the Hezza of the lower deck, John Prescott.

The gossip is wrong. The skeletons in Mr Blair's cupboard are rattling elsewhere. Yesterday they gathered under the aegis of the Local Government Association at London's QEII conference centre, to be addressed by Mr Blair himself. They came from the City Labour parties of Manchester and Liverpool, Birmingham and Newcastle, Bristol and Edinburgh. They are the three-quarters of Britain whose local administration is currently under some form of Labour control. They are 11,000 serving Labour councillors, the roots, trunk and branches of new Labour. The parliamentary party is but seasonal blossom.

John Major's hostility to localism has driven Tory activists to despair and oblivion. Even in the counties he has stripped them of power and privilege. They have folded their tents and gone home. One reason for the lack of Tory response to the current economic good news is that there is nothing on which it can build. Conservatism has lost its community leaders, its saloon bar cronies. Mr Major set out in 1990 to crush them, to disprove the sacred maxim that "all politics is local politics". He is still trying.

Mr Blair wants to "breathe new life into local democracy". The litmus test of such a claim is simple. It is not directly elected mayors, though Mr Blair's support for them could prove one of the most exciting innovations in British politics since the war. It is not returning health or further education to local government or getting more councillors into quango jobs. The test is rate-capping. Rate-capping, introduced into

Britain in 1984, did more to sap responsibility from local democracy than the poll tax and council tax combined. The related seizure by the Treasury of business rates was the biggest ever act of "nationalisation". Some £14 billion worth of revenue moved from the control of local electorates to the Exchequer. This passed undebated in Parliament, uninvestigated by any select committee and unmentioned by the press.

Capping had nothing to do with poll tax, which was originally proposed to increase, not diminish, local accountability. It was a means to get all British taxes under Treasury control. Margaret Thatcher could not bear the sight of any corner of the kingdom defying her orders. Central government's contribution to local spending rose from 40 per cent in 1984 to above 80 per cent today. Its control over that spending is probably 95 per cent.

The effect has been disastrous for the public finances. Prior to 1984, local spending rose slower than central spending. Afterwards, it rose as fast, if not faster. Previously thrifty councils spent up to the cap limit. For the past decade, central government has poured out subsidies to local taxpayers, adding up to 4p to the basic rate of income tax. VAT also rose by 20 per cent.

This is the cause of the Tory party's vulnerability to the charge of "extra taxes". Ministers seem to believe that the more public spending is brought directly under their control, the lower it is likely to be. They believe that Whitehall is inherently more careful with public money than the town or county halls collectively. There is not a shred of evidence for this smug assumption.

So what of Labour? The party opposed both capping and the seizure of the business rate. It promised to reverse them. Nothing could have been easier than to maintain that pledge, but Mr Blair now

says only that he will "end crude council tax-capping". The word "crude" is a recent insertion. Connoisseurs of political grammar will spot the cunning. Does Mr Blair mean to end all rate-capping, which he regards as crude, or end only such capping as he chooses to define as crude? The former indicates a belief in local discretion; the latter a belief that the Treasury knows best. The answer is the latter. "We do not believe it is right," said Mr Blair yesterday, "that central government should universally cap all council budgets, but we will retain power to protect local taxpayers from excessive increases."

These are the words used by Margaret Thatcher in introducing rate-capping in 1984. The sole point of capping was to curb "excessive increases". It was a political assault on a dozen councils that were taxing and spending through the roof. Local electors should have been left to throw these councils out. Already in the middle 1980s, Labour militants were being ousted by moderates, and Liberal Democrats were on the attack. Local accountability was working.

Tony Blair now appears to be drifting towards the same attitude as Margaret Thatcher. His belief that "any government must retain reserve powers" over rates is a denial not only of what happens abroad, but of what happened in Britain before 1984. The essence of the ballot is precisely to curb "excessive tax increases". The local ballot needs reform to make it more accountable, not centralisation to make it less so. Mr Blair suggests that accountability can be met by reserve capping powers and an expanded battery of auditors and regulators. I wonder what he (or Mr Major) would say if Brussels proposed a similar regime for Britain's fiscal policy under a single currency.

## Simon Jenkins



Dressing down: Stringfellow with his young partner

so we're going to have to go straight to the horse's mouth, if you'll pardon the expression."

### Half price

DESPITE the luke-warm audience response at the first night of *Voyeurz*, the smutty show carries a strict bar on under-18s. On Monday, one 17-year-old in a transparent dress leaving nothing to the imagination, slipped through the net on the arm of Peter

Labour has bought lock, stock and barrel the Treasury thesis that all public spending is a seamless web. Local councils can be allowed discretion over how to administer a service, but not over aggregate spending. It is a central government agent. A council can raise charges at will, but not taxes at will. It can sell assets, but not relieve the money. Even the famous council-house sales revenue will be released by the Treasury, says Mr Blair, only "on a phased basis". That is the present Government's policy.

Indeed with the credible exception of elected mayors, Mr Blair's local government policy is indistinguishable from that of the Tories. He appears to intend no change to the capping regime at all. When he says that "councils will have choice and flexibility... in stark contrast to the current approach", I cannot see what he is talking about. The words are form. As for the one-time promise to restore the business rate to local councils, it has vanished in the wind.

This means that under Labour there would be no check on council spending except through the medium of central government and its agencies. The cap will remain for all councils in so far as it remains for "excessive" ones. I predict that local spending will be pushed upwards as it has been under the Tories. Worse, Mr Blair will find militants creeping back into positions of power on local councils, shielded from irresponsibility by capping, manoeuvring their union friends back into leverage. Here is the rebirth of local industrial strife.

Mr Blair is rightly terrified that left-wing councils may blot his escutcheon, as he did Jim Callaghan's and Neil Kinnock's before him. He is reluctant to surrender a short-term disciplinary weapon, capping, that might keep them under some control. Yet capping encouraged militancy by centralising blame for poor services. Uncapping is far more effective, since it returns accountability to local democracy. Remove capping, reform local councils and the electors can be left to slaughter the militants.

The only virtue of poll tax, in its original, untaxed (and uncapped) form, was that it proposed just this. Decisions on local taxes would lie with local electors. If they did not like their councillors' decisions, they could throw them out — the more so if everyone paid something. But that was the one virtue in the poll tax that Margaret Thatcher abandoned. Perhaps the time has come to reassess it.

## Modernise but don't privatise

Gordon Brown defends Labour's radical credentials

Last week's document leaked to the *Times* from inside the Treasury considered only one path of reform for Britain's welfare state: an American-style New Right retrenchment of its functions and services. But it is quite wrong to suggest, as many commentators have, that the only debate is between privatisation and the status quo, and by implication to criticise Labour for opposing change.

Labour agrees that the status quo is not an option. Too many people in Britain today are not working, condemned to poverty and social deprivation. For them, and millions more in insecure employment, the welfare state is falling. The real debate is between privatisation, increasingly advocated on the Right, and modernisation of the welfare state.

Today's welfare state is failing to put people back to work and to promote independence, self-sufficiency and security. Since 1979, long-term unemployment has increased from 350,000 to more than 800,000; the number dependent on means-tested benefits has risen from 17 to 36 per cent of the population; and the number of workless households has risen from one in 12 to one in five. This is why welfare spending on non-pensioner households has increased by 250 per cent since 1979. The consequences are clear. Income inequality is now higher than at any time this century; inequality is growing faster in Britain than in any other Western country, and the number of people in poverty has grown to one in three.

This is a consequence of economic failure. But it is also a symptom of a welfare state which has not been modernised to take account of the end of jobs for life, the growth of part-time employment and falling demand for unskilled workers.

The Tory response to the inadequacies of the welfare state is to suggest that it is unaffordable and must be dismantled. The significance of the Treasury document is that it reflects the thinking of the ascendant Tory Right. Compulsory insurance for invalidity benefit, unemployment benefits and even the basic state pension are all on the hit-list of a Conservative Party that believes it cannot afford the welfare state.

Yet all the evidence suggests that wholesale private provision of benefits will drastically increase charges for people, compound insecurity and, as the evidence of the private pensions fiascos of the past few years shows, leave many without proper provision.

Labour's response to the failure of the status quo is very different. The dominant feature of the years to 2015 will not just be the rapidity of change, amid new waves of technological progress, but the need to reassess completely the role of government — not, as sometimes in the past, acting as a substitute for individual responsibility, but enabling individuals to realise their full potential.

Labour has a four-pronged strategy to modernise the welfare state. First, we have set out a costed programme to ensure that every young person unemployed for more than six months will receive either a job offer, through tax rebates to the private or voluntary sector, or the opportunity to learn new skills. New opportunities demand new responsibilities. A life on permanent benefit cannot be an option for young people.

Secondly, we shall provide opportunities for people to save for the future and to improve their skills. Our proposed Individual Savings Account will help people to save for retirement. Everyone will have the chance to contribute to an Individual Learning Account, with special help to the unemployed. And we shall ensure that every 16 to 18-year-old studies in order to achieve a basic minimum education and skills. It is because the status quo is not working that we are undertaking a review of all public spending on post-16 education, including child benefit for that age-group.

Thirdly, Labour will ease the poverty traps that prevent many people from taking jobs that are on offer. Chris Smith, Labour's social security spokesman, has recently made a number of proposals for pilot schemes to investigate means to tackle this problem, so that the Employment Service is not just about paying benefits, but about getting people into work. And as part of our modernisation of benefits, we will introduce a minimum wage to underpin the benefit system and to ensure that benefits for those in work, such as Family Credit, help those in genuine need, rather than subsidising employers.

Fourthly, just as it is wrong to have penal rates of taxation for those at the top, so it cannot be right that low-earners should face punitive marginal tax and benefit rates. That is why, in contrast to the Government's long-term aim of abolishing inheritance tax and capital gains tax, Labour's aim is to reduce tax rates and cut benefit tapers at the bottom of the income scale.

So Labour will act in government as a vehicle for change, preparing Britain for the new millennium. But we reject the proposal for a Republican-style privatisation of the welfare state — the Tory programme for a fifth term. I do not believe that the British people want a country further divided, more unequal, with greater insecurity for all. Our plan for government is to modernise the welfare state, promoting work, choice and independence to ensure security and opportunity for all.

The author is Shadow Chancellor and MP for Dunfermline East.

## Shore, shore

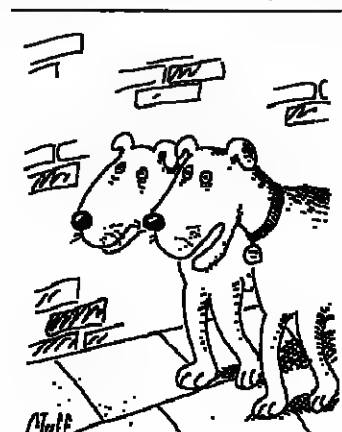
ANOTHER winning idea from Labour's inspirational deputy leader, John Prescott. He says he wants Labour activists to set up Punch-and-Judy-style booths at the seaside this summer as part of a campaign to target tourists.

"We'll fight the Tories on the beaches," rumbles pudding-face Prescott threateningly, sporting a new Labour handkerchief on his huge head. "We are going to give our people a bucket and spade and a pledge-card and send them out into the sunshine to soak up the voters."

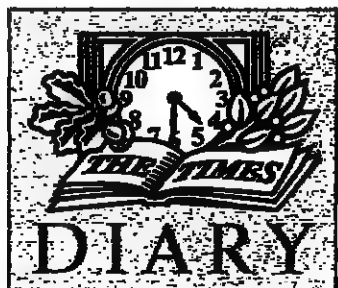
Prescott hopes to find converts among the 16 million visitors to the South West this season. He wants information and recruitment stalls on promenades and piers alongside the ice-cream sellers.

"We'll topple him from his sandcastle," said one MP thugishly. "and then kick sand in his face."

● The luminous London taxi driven daily to the House of Commons by Simon Hughes, sandal-wearer and environment spokesman for the Liberal Democrats, is upsetting fellow MPs. They complain that he parks the ridiculous vehicle in a slot reserved for the disabled.



"Months of beefburgers and suddenly it's all lamb chops"



disabled. His office is appalled by the slur. "Not true," they splutter. "It's parked next door to the disabled bays, not in them."

### Team colours

HE MAY have been banned from driving in February, but that hasn't deterred the Benetton Formula One team from taking on Jamie Blandford, wayward son of the Duke of Marlborough. He has just landed a job as organiser of VIP hospitality for the outfit.

This is his second recent job in motor-racing. His last, as marketing director of racing-car company Brodie Britain Racing of Brackley, ended ignominiously when he was found slumped over the wheel of his company Escort Cosworth on the A44 at Begbroke, in Oxfordshire. When police found him, he asked them which part of London

he was in. Benetton insists that he has no need of a car in his new post.

● The lightning strike at Buckingham Palace yesterday brings to mind the day in 1955 when the Queen narrowly escaped a similar incident because of a rail strike. A woman was killed and 46 others injured while sheltering from a storm by the Royal Box at an Ascot race meeting. The rail strike had forced the postponement of Royal Ascot, so Her Majesty stayed at home at a Buckingham Palace for a garden party.

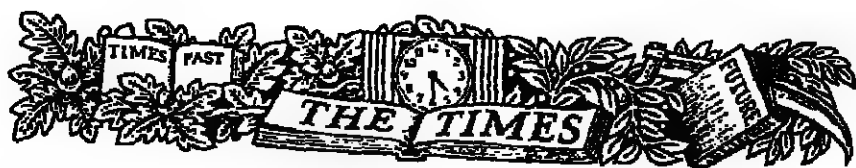
### Written off

STUFFED SHIRTS at Buckingham Palace are doing their best to stymie the *Daily Mirror's* campaign to have the Princess of Wales restored to HRH status. First obstacle is the Queen's Proctor, the messy marital fixer for the royals, who has refused to accept the 80,000-plus petitions so far collected by the *Mirror*. Buckingham Palace, meanwhile, refuses to open the Proctor's post. Time for a blindsided move.

"We're going to have to go straight to the Queen," says the paper's Editor, Piers "Guten" Morgan. "She can't refuse 80,000 letters from her subjects. The Proctor's being a typical little proctor,

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## A DEPRESSING RESHUFFLE

Clarke will now face no internal dissent

The Treasury has become a sceptic-free zone. With the departure of David Heathcoat-Amory, Kenneth Clarke has managed to reintroduce to his department his old PPS, Philip Oppenheim, a man who shares his federalist views. Any economic arguments against a single currency will now have to be made from outside.

Yesterday, Mr Heathcoat-Amory made them with admirable force in his pamphlet published by the Bruges Group. A lapidary piece of writing, it marshals a fine collection of unanswerable objections to tying diverse countries together in one exchange rate.

Neatly he demolishes the main claims. If Britain stayed out of EMU, would it not lose inward investment? No, the relative depreciation of sterling has not prevented Britain from winning 40 per cent of American and Japanese direct investment in the EU. Far more important than exchange rates are costs, taxes, labour relations and language.

Does not a single market need a single currency? The North American Free Trade Area has managed perfectly well without one. And given that more than half Britain's trade takes place with non-EU countries, the euro might actually be set at the wrong rate for Britain against their currencies. The (not very substantial) costs to businesses and individuals of exchanging currencies would fall, but these should be set against the immense costs to banks and retailers of changing to the euro.

Then Mr Heathcoat-Amory makes a forceful case against the single currency, one which every British politician should read. Monetary union can only work in an area, such as the United States, which has high labour mobility, labour flexibility and wages that move down as well as up. Otherwise depressed regions or countries remain depressed, with stubbornly high unemployment. They cannot depreciate their cur-

rencies or cut interest rates or increase their deficits in order to reflate their economies.

Even in America, though, where the necessary economic conditions exist, the federal government still has to smooth out differences between rich and poor states through its own taxes and spending. If the European Union (which has none of the mobility or flexibility of America) wanted to do the same, it would have to ask member states to contribute four to five times the amount that they already do to Union funds. Britain's net contribution is already £38 billion. Would any Parliament sanction an increase to nearer £200 billion?

There is no indication that Mr Clarke has thought through these problems. The depressing element about the reshuffle is that the debate will now not even take place in the Treasury. The band of federalists in the Tory party may be dwindling, but Mr Clarke has managed to find one who will show no dissent. His department will now be wholly removed from the prevailing views on the government benches.

The other depressing aspect to this otherwise trivial rearrangement is what did not happen. Sir Nicholas Lyell, despite having been lacerated in the Scott report, remains Attorney-General. Douglas Hogg, surely one of the least competent Agriculture Ministers in memory, stays with the slurry. Other unimpressive Cabinet ministers remain to struggle on.

The trouble is that there are hardly mobs of talented ministers beating down the Cabinet door — though it is encouraging to see David Willetts rewarded with a promotion. One sign of a long drawn-out administration is that there are more gifted ex-ministers on the back benches than there are promising newcomers on their way up. Cabinets need a few "big beasts" in them; sadly none are now prowling outside the compound.

## A PROCESS CONTINUES

Israel and the Palestine National Authority make progress

A meeting that ends with the pledge to hold more meetings may not seem especially exciting; but the talks held yesterday between Yasser Arafat and David Levy, the Israeli Foreign Minister, achieved much simply by being the first to involve a member of the new Israeli Cabinet. At the same time Binyamin Netanyahu eased the restrictions on Arabs from the West Bank and Gaza working inside Israel, imposed in response to the wave of suicide bombings earlier this year.

These developments should be set against the gloomy predictions in many quarters that the electoral victory last May of the coalition led by Likud meant the end of the peace process. The cautious resumption of dialogue with the Palestinian National Authority (PNA) reflects the inadequacies of that interpretation rather than any fundamental change in Mr Netanyahu. Reconciliation between Jews and Palestinians was so clearly in the interests of both parties that it was never likely to be jettisoned overnight. The peace process has changed emphasis but not purpose. A complete breakdown in order on the West Bank and Gaza Strip would threaten both Likud and the PNA; the desire to avoid that draws the two together.

The resumption of political contacts now has to be taken two steps further, both of which will require greater flexibility from the Israeli Prime Minister. The first is the need to end the uncertainty about the redeployment of the Israeli Army in Hebron, where Likud needs to balance its obligations to honour the existing commitment to withdraw with legitimate concerns for the security of Israeli settlers. A compromise should be possible. The second is that at some point Mr Netanyahu will need to deal

directly and personally with Mr Arafat. The "final status" talks which began last May would have been difficult whichever Israeli party was in power — any Israeli government would have had to demonstrate that the result is, in the words of Mr Netanyahu's campaign pledge, a "secure peace" for Israel. What will be required over the next six months is rather less in the way of spectacular summitry, beyond that necessary for inter-authority machinery to run smoothly, and more of the sort of practical benefits signified by the easing of work permits. The process will grow in popular authority the more it can demonstrate tangible results.

Thus the agenda should focus on economic development and trade, infrastructure modernisation, and the sharing of key resources such as water, through a practical partnership between Israel, Jordan, and the PNA. These are the real quality of life issues in the region. As Mr Arafat helps to deliver progress of this sort, and a credible security policy, Mr Netanyahu should agree to greater autonomy in broader areas for the PNA. At this stage, speculation over what role, if any, Damascus might play or the ultimate status of Jerusalem is far more likely to sow divisions than extremists will exploit than to yield anything positive. Likud's tough line on terrorism may make it easier for it to experiment in these areas than was true for Labour.

The Arafat-Levy meeting is a promising beginning. A steady political dialogue creates the conditions for mutually beneficial co-operation on the ground. But it is on these bread and butter questions, rather than high diplomacy, that the pace of the process will ultimately prosper or falter.

## YULE IN JULY

If you believe in Father Christmas, please log on

Christmas comes, but once a year is enough. Except in Copenhagen, where the 33rd World Santa Claus Congress opened yesterday. More than 150 Father Xmasmen from 18 countries sweated through the city, intoning their national versions of "Ho, ho, ho" — in the heatwave, whistles and fur-trimmed scarlet shell suits, they sounded "Hot, hot, hot". They were escorted by the Nordic elves who help them to deal out the presents, visited Parliament and ate a Christmas lunch with inspiring Yuletide punch.

Most people go through three Santa Claus phases. First they believe in Santa Claus. Then they do not believe in Santa Claus. And finally they are Santa Claus. Moreover, for most people Christmas is the time when their credit card overdrafts are seasonally adjusted. However, that is no reason to shoot Father Christmas in July as unseasonal. Christmas is merely the outward and visible sign of his job of goodwill, just as his Sunday sermon should be the apex of the parson's week, not his job description.

For Father Christmas is big in Copenhagen. This is partly because of the Hans Andersen factor of sentimentality about children. But also because letters addressed to Father Christmas at the North Pole are disingenuously handled by the Royal Danish post office, with concomitant commercial and publicity crackers. And this year's Santa Claus Congress has to discuss a threat to its industry from cyberspace. Internet offers 1,100 different addresses for "Santa". The fear is that once computer-literate children

discover this, they will conclude, in the words of the sledgehammer of the congress, Ib Groth Rasmussen, that "the whole thing is a load of tosh", as well as a commercial rip-off. So the deconstructionist version now says that there is not one single Father Christmas but a global network of Santas and elves operating an express delivery service. Father Christmas has already gone through enough transformations to make his postmodernist manifestation plausible. The child-loving bishop of Myra in Lycia became Saint Nikolaus, who bribed children with a stocking if they were good, and threatened them with a stick if they were bad. And then he was changed into the alarming old unisex person, smelling of beer after lunch, who terrorises the hyperstores of modern conspicuous shopping from October onwards.

And children as well as the children industry may find this latest version of the Father Christmas story acceptable. A multinational consortium of benevolent flying executives is as plausible to the modern child as a bumbling old fellow in a long white beard and red dressing-gown. And in any case children are as practical about Christmas as politicians are about election returns. Father Christmas's stocking may be in. But there is the Uncle John return to be declared, and the Aunt Isabel ward still to come in. Children believe in what they can see and work. So the modern Yuletide instruction is not, "If you believe in Father Christmas, post your letter up the chimney." It goes, "If you believe in Father Christmas, log on."

## Support for postal privatisation plan

From Mr George Guise

Sir, The Government's intention to suspend the Post Office monopoly unless postal workers call off their strike union (report, July 23) is correct. If it does not do so, it will be preventing the independent delivery of private letters when people who have protected jobs in the Royal Mail are refusing to make deliveries.

No modern government is elected to deliver letters, parcels and magazines, any more than it is elected to prevent the free market causing these things to happen automatically and efficiently.

Suspending the monopoly is neither provocative nor doctrinaire. It is simply a modern response to a Neanderthal threat, permitting market forces to do what the strikers will not. This is quite different from using the Army to drive ambulances or transport coal.

If new Labour does not support suspension in the event of a continuous strike, it will reveal much about the relative importance they ascribe to an efficient infrastructure.

Those "Clause 4 Conservatives" who frustrated privatisation, on the spurious grounds that it would lead to inefficiency, should be deeply ashamed at this, the first blight of an industry which they have left to wither on the vine.

Yours faithfully,  
GEORGE GUISE  
(Prime Minister's Policy Unit (1986-90)),  
90 Langacre, WC2,  
July 23.

## Gift to Oxford

From Mr George Racz

Sir, You report today that Mr Waife said's gift of £20 million to Oxford University may not be accepted because of the donor's "business background".

The inference of your report is that opposition to the gift is based on Mr Waife's help to British Aerospace in clinching an arms deal with Saudi Arabia.

It is offensive, and it will deter from further offers those whose munificence has kept our most prestigious institutions alive, if before a donation is accepted the donor has to prove that the moneys offered did not come from arms deals, or from the killing of endangered species, or the sale of seal-skins or elephant tusks.

The potential use of money is far more important than its origin. Let us accept all donations with gratitude, without investigating their provenance.

Yours faithfully,  
GEORGE RACZ,  
7 Wellington House,  
Eton Road, NW3,  
July 17.

## Stone of Scone

From Mr R. G. C. Cowe

Sir, Now that the Stone of Scone is back in the news (Letters, July 17), I think it timely to recall what I suggested to you in a letter 45 years ago (January 6, 1951) about the Stone's eventual resting place. My suggestion is still relevant.

Some want the Stone to be north of the Tweed; others want it to be on English soil. As a native of the only town in the Kingdom which fulfils both of these requirements — Berwick-upon-Tweed — may I recommend that the Stone should come to rest there?

Not only would this be acceptable to the shade of Edward I; it would also give a welcome acknowledgement to the commendable efforts of the good folk of Berwick in the field of historic conservation.

Yours faithfully,  
COLLIN COWE,  
Brookside Cottage,  
Brook End,  
Chadlington, Oxford,  
July 17.

From Dr Denis O'Brien

Sir, It is true, as Mr Geoffrey Hinton tells us (Letter, July 17) that, despite the ravages of the revolution, the former Abbey of St Denis outside Paris does still contain a splendid series of royal tombs.

But unfortunately that is only half the truth. The royal tombs of St Denis are today, all of them, empty.

Yours faithfully,  
DENIS O'BRIEN,  
Château du Chalange,  
61390 Courtois,  
Orne, France,  
July 18.

## Salmon stocks

From the Secretary of the North Atlantic Salmon Conservation Organisation (NASCO)

Sir, Mr Orri Vigfusson, Chairman of the North Atlantic Salmon Fund, refers in his letter of July 13 to the failure of NASCO to reach a salmon quota this year for West Greenland. In fact the 1995 NASCO quota for Greenland was just 77 tonnes, and for 1996 NASCO was discussing a quota of similar levels — a far cry from the catches of over 2,500 tonnes taken at West Greenland before NASCO was formed in 1984.

Sadly, the problem is much more complex than Mr Vigfusson appears to realise. The main threats to the future of the wild salmon lie in huge losses

## Meeting criteria for monetary union

From the Director of the European Movement

Sir, The tax-cutting policies advocated by John Redwood in his populist article of July 18, "Clark must live within our means", are not precluded by the monetary union criteria. Member states can choose to cut taxes as much as they like as long as they cut spending as well: the criteria simply seek to ensure public-sector budgetary discipline by keeping borrowing under control.

Member states within the future monetary union can have high spending and high taxes or low spending and low taxes. This is rightly a matter for domestic debate. What they cannot do is have high borrowing.

In order to fulfil the criteria for monetary union many member states are doing exactly what Redwood would advocate as a first step to economic recovery: cutting spending to reduce public borrowing, leading to

reduced interest rates and faster economic growth. But what Redwood demands at home as part of an economic package, he seems to damn abroad as a failure to deal with unemployment.

Finding money for tax cuts, or otherwise, is a domestic problem and has nothing to do with the criteria for monetary union.

Isn't it time for the anti-Europeanists to stop using the European Union as a scapegoat for all their frustrations and to engage in a serious debate about whether Britain should participate in European monetary union when it is established in three years time?

Yours faithfully,  
STEPHEN WOODARD,  
Director,  
European Movement —  
United Kingdom,  
Dean Bradley House,  
52 Haverfield Road, SW1,  
July 18.

## Children's fears of exam pressure

From the Chief Executive of The Samaritans

Sir, George Turnbull, spokesman for the Associated Examining Board and Southern Examining Group, claims (Education, July 19) that ChildLine and Samaritan "spin doctors" fuel fear in schools at exam time.

Last August, The Samaritans conducted an awareness-raising campaign when exam results came out; and, this summer, the charity will again advertise on radio stations with the message, "Whatever you're going through, we'll go through it with you".

Such publicity aims to emphasise the importance of talking about feelings before they become potentially overwhelming, and to make sure young people realise that The Samaritans are there to help them, if ever they want to talk to someone in confidence. We do not believe that such publicity exacerbates young people's problems.

We make no claims that exams increase suicide rates, but we are targeting young people at a time when some may feel under intense strain. Disappointments can be intense. An accumulation of pressures — exams, family or personal expectations, growing independence — could lead a young person to despair and the contemplation of suicide.

It is all too easy for adults to dismiss the highly charged emotions that teenagers experience. The Samaritans take them seriously. Talking and finding yourself listened to can help put the future into perspective, in some

cases make a future seem more possible. There are, of course, no statistics for suicides prevented.

Yours sincerely,  
SIMON ARMSTRONG,  
Chief Executive, The Samaritans,  
10 The Grove, Slough, Berkshire,  
July 22.

From the Chief Executive of ChildLine

Sir, ChildLine did not put the fear of exams into children. It was there already.

While insisting that "the overwhelming majority of students... are not unduly concerned about their exams or schoolwork", George Turnbull takes ChildLine to task over its research into young people's attitudes to examinations.

Nowhere did we suggest that the young people in our schools survey who said they were worried about their exams felt suicidal; however, 13 of the 196 children who called ChildLine last year about exams said they were feeling suicidal — and one said that she had actually attempted suicide.

We make no apology whatsoever for alerting parents to the need to support their children through a stressful time.

Yours faithfully,  
VALERIE HOWARTH,  
Chief Executive, ChildLine,  
Royal Mail Building,  
Studd Street, NI,  
July 23.

## Pub names

From Norroy & Ulster King of Arms

Sir, I thoroughly sympathise with Nicholas Winter's campaign to save our old pub names (Letters, July 18, 20, 22).

In 1978 I was told that the brewery and the local authority had no powers to stop the new owner of the "Salmon & Ball" in Bethnal Green from renaming it "Tipples". The inn had been a landmark since at least the early 18th century and had witnessed many historic events including the hanging of rebellious weavers.

Such houses are often built on street corners and, where redevelopment has taken place, can provide the only remaining link with a bygone street pattern.

Their names are part of our cultural history and only a few months ago I was asked to write a foreword to a well-illustrated Japanese book on historic English pub signs which I am told is selling well.

Yours faithfully,  
HUBERT CHESSHIRE,  
Norroy & Ulster King of Arms,  
College of Arms,  
Queen Victoria Street, EC4.

From Mr George Ball

Sir, Pub names belong to the nation. For travellers they are at once a history book, an art gallery and a source of delight (the first words which my infant daughter ever read to me were "The Fox").

For drinkers the only name that counts is that of the licensee: the man who keeps an orderly house, who cashes a cheque, who takes a message and who on occasion provides an alibi. Within that fraternity the pub is often known by a former landlord's name.

It is to cover the dearth of great landlords that the marketing men of the pub chains are trying to standard-

ise this part of our unique heritage and kid us that all of their pubs are the same. They are not.

Cheers!  
GEORGE BALL,  
The Wall House,  
Wimborne Road, Leicester.

From Mr Stephen Cox

Sir, The debate about pub names, however welcome, is missing a much wider issue. Historic pub interiors are being destroyed, the cosy multi-room floor plan eliminated, and some unfortunate pubs receive drastic refurbishment every three to five years.

CAMRA's concern is for the pub as a whole. Certainly there are cases where the change of name removes an historic landmark, or where the name change is part of much wider changes. But no doubt "The Railway" and "The Garibaldi" were tasteless modern names in their time. To save the pub's name and lose its soul is a pyrrhic victory.

Yours faithfully,  
STEPHEN COX  
(Campaigns manager),  
Campaign for Real Ale (CAMRA),  
230 Hatfield Road,  
St Albans, Hertfordshire,  
July 22.

From Mrs D. Sullivan

Sir, In Warrington there was a pub in the 1730s called the "Bricklayers Arms". In the 1790s it became "The Dog and Partridge". In 1798 it became "The Jolly Butcher". In 1810 it became "The Curriers Arms". In the 1830s it became the "Saint Patrick". In the 1840s it went back to "The Curriers Arms". It kept this last name until its closure in 1893.

Yours faithfully,  
DOROTHY SULLIVAN,  
8 Menin Avenue,  
Warrington, Cheshire,  
July 21.

## German 'Creation' at the Proms

From Professor Emeritus Nicholas Temperley

Sir, Richard Morrison ("First Night of the Proms", later editions, July 20) questions the decision to sing Haydn's *The Creation* in German to an English audience because, he says, "Haydn was inspired to write it by the English choral tradition", and "it demands a direct link to the listener." He is quite right, but the reasons are much weightier than those he offers.

The original text was English and was adapted to German by Haydn's patron, Gottfried van Swieten, in such a way that the German text would fit as closely as possible to the English (including the Authorised Version) in sense and rhythm. When Haydn wrote the music he had both texts in mind. He set the German and hoped that the English would fit equally well, although in practice Swieten had to make many further adjustments.

The point is that Haydn wanted his masterpiece to be performed in England, to be well understood there, and to take its place beside Handel's oratorios. After all, it had originally been commissioned by Salomon for performance in London. Haydn himself published the full score in 1800 with bilingual (German/English) title-page and text. Rather than leave the English text to the mercy of an unknown translator, he supervised the process himself, preserving most of the original English words.

So, if we are to do what the composer intended, we should sing *The Creation* in English when the audience is predominantly English-speaking. Unfortunately, Haydn's English text, as adjusted by Swieten, has many faulty rhythms and is unusable in places. At least 20 "improved" English versions have been published since 1800, many of them freely rewriting the text. Which version to use is a matter of taste, but there is no case for choosing German, which vitiates the composer's clear intentions.

Yours faithfully,  
NICHOLAS TEMPERLEY,  
43 Abbey Road, NW8,  
July 20.

## Broadcasting opera

From the Director of the Arts House Foundation

Sir, Making it mandatory for the largest opera and ballet companies to broadcast a certain number of performances without extra fees (Letters, July 13, 19) would certainly make the regular public subsidy more acceptable to people who live too far from the great centres to ever be able to enjoy a visit.

The weakness of television as a medium for delivering opera is, however, that most living rooms do not make good substitute opera houses — the screen is too small, the sound is different, and there are disruptions.

This foundation has already put a scheme to the Arts Council for creating a widespread net of small theatres specially designed for presenting television relays to a high standard — not only of opera and ballet but of concerts, specially produced dramas, computer-generated art, talks, tours of art exhibitions.

A hundred such rooms could enable up to 30,000 people daily to join live audiences in enjoying the work of companies based all over the UK — extending the precedent of 40,000 people enjoying a relay of the Last Night of the Proms on just one evening in London.

Yours faithfully,  
ROBIN DARTINGTON, Director,  
Arts House Foundation,  
6 Chiltern Road,  
Hitchin, Hertfordshire,  
July 22.

## Student drinking

From Mr Harry Brampton

Sir, We should beware of jumping to hasty conclusions about the present scale of student drinking based on your report, "Student drinkers push campus bar bills over £44 million" (July 22).

On your front page on the same day a report ("Right to see school references") suggests that fewer than 300,000 new students will join universities this year, and that therefore the total student population is around one million.

If the annual take in student bars is £44 million (not all on alcohol), simple calculation suggests that an average student spends some £1.50 per week over the course of an academic year of 30 weeks. A very responsible attitude. I think.

Yours faithfully,  
HARRY BRAMPTON,  
57 Westfields,  
St Albans, Hertfordshire,  
July 22.

## Out to grass?

From Mr Geoff Covey

Sir, Your brief overseas item today, "Preacher, 136, meets his maker", refers to the late mosque preacher as "retired". Was this necessary? Not even judges continue employment into their second century.

Yours faithfully,  
G. M. COVEY,  
36 Bernays Close,  
Stannmore, Middlesex,  
July 22.











Brighton is seeing a huge revival as a commercial, cultural and leisure centre. Christopher Warman reports

## Facelift for the 'city by the sea'

When a businessman arrives in town and hails a cab, he will expect to be regaled with a firm opinion on the state of the country and the shortcomings of the Government.

Not in Brighton. Some 300 taxi drivers — half the town's complement — have undergone a course organised by Brighton and Hove Economic Development Company (BHEDCO) to help them to be ambassadors for the town, knowledgeable about property developments in the area and the opportunities for investment.

"The cab driver is often the first person a visitor sees when arriving, and it is important that the first impressions are positive about Brighton and Hove and what we have to offer," says Michael Petrie, chief executive of BHEDCO.

The "ambassadors" scheme is one of a number of initiatives by the organisation, a private/public sector partnership of business and local authorities. It was set up in August 1993 to reverse the somewhat negative attitudes that the business community in particular were aware of in considering Brighton and Hove, and to help its revival as a commercial and cultural centre — as well as a leading leisure resort.

One of BHEDCO's first tasks was to carry out research about business perceptions of the area. Many companies were not aware that there was an international airport nearby (Cotswold is only 20 minutes away); did not know that there were two universities there; were unaware of the availability of office space; and did not realise the range

of skills of the local workforce, not least in languages from the many language schools.

There is evidence that BHEDCO's efforts to address this challenge are working, helping to attract £500 million of new investment by developers and businesses. "We are also forging links with Invest in Britain and with corporate relocation organisations," Mr Petrie says. "Instead of whingeing about losing out to northern development corporations, for example, we said we must get together and get on with it."

The range of initiatives is wide, including small schemes like the "Brighton looking good" campaign, tackling graffiti among other things. The Grade I listed railway station is undergoing a £20 million refurbishment, and the road from the station to the sea is to be transformed into Ocean Boulevard in the next few months, with the help of businesses on the route including TSB Trustcard, Commercial Union and the Rank Organisation.

A £2 million seafront development, assisted by a Single Regeneration Budget grant, is upgrading the area between the two piers; the Royal Pavilion restoration has been completed, and a further £1 million has been spent restoring the surrounding gardens. The nearby Dome Concert Hall, formerly the Royal Pavilion riding stables, has been awarded Lottery funding towards a £28 million scheme. The Museum and Art Gallery will be expanded and a new central library built for £6 million.

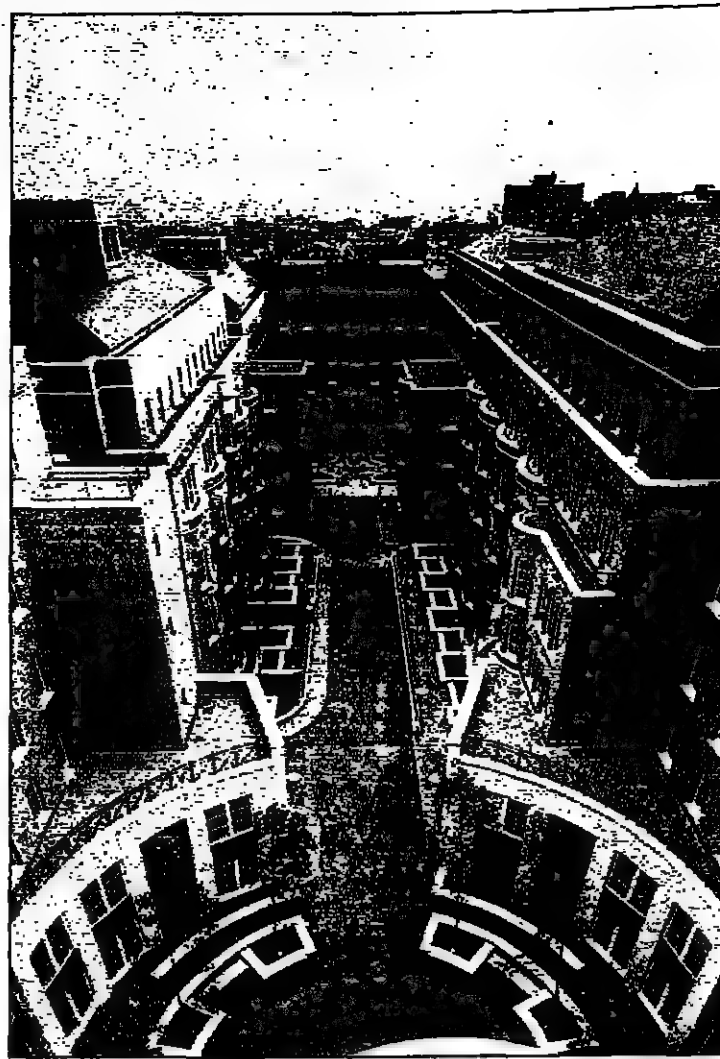
Standard Life, owner of Churchill Square, the main shopping centre in the town, has started work on a £90 million rebuilding and expansion scheme; the £15 million Sussex Innovation Centre has opened on the University of Sussex campus to cater for the needs of high-tech research and development; and a £4 million Hove Technology Park is being planned. The largest office development in Sussex, the 250,000 sq ft Trafalgar Place adjoining the station, is now 70 per cent occupied, with tenants

including Eagle Star, Mott MacDonald, TSB and the recently established Occupational Pensions Regulatory Authority. American Express, the biggest employer in the town, has concentrated a number of its European activities into its Brighton headquarters. Mr Petrie explains: "Many organisations are realising the benefits of a location outside London, where costs can be minimised but crucial links with the capital can be maintained."

Robert Stiles, of the property agent Sales Harold Williams, which is closely involved with BHEDCO, is positive about the town's future, as road improvements, retail and hotel expansion, the availability of office space and environmental improvements come to fruition.

He says: "All these factors indicate that an increasing number of companies will settle on Brighton as their preferred location, and joint businesses like BUPA International, American Express, General Accident and Systems International. The town is now living up to its billing as 'London-by-Sea': it offers the business, retail and leisure advantages of the capital together with a healthy and high quality environment to live in."

Brighton is now looking to achieve city status, after merging with its neighbouring local authority, Hove, to form a unitary authority on April 1, 1997. "After that we can apply for city status, and must have a good chance. Then we will be able to say, 'Come to our city by the sea'," says Mr Petrie.



Trafalgar Place, Brighton: largest office development in Sussex

### MARKET MOVES

#### Tesco behind office project

SPEN Hill Properties Ltd, owned by Tesco, has launched its speculative flagship City office scheme at Eighty Cheapside, London EC2. The 75,900 sq ft development will be completed in October this year. Bruce Cheer of Spen Hill comments: "Eighty Cheapside is one of a new wave of City office buildings being built in the run up to the third millennium. The City will benefit from the provision of a total of more than 160,000 sq ft of office space, a restaurant, a Tesco Metro foodstore and nearly 30,000 sq ft of retail."

STANDARD Life has bought Swans Gardens and Centre At The Circus, with frontages to Piccadilly and Regent Street, London W1, for £39.5 million on an 88-year lease from OGM Dodabetta BV, a subsidiary of the leading Dutch pension fund PGGM. The Grade II listed building dates from 1925, and was once the home of the department store Swan & Edgar.

KINGSPARK Developments and local textile company A.C. Gill have formed a joint venture to develop a 100,000 sq ft headquarters office scheme in Nottingham's Lace Market. The investment value of the completed project is expected to be around £15 million, and the development, known as Archer Gate, will be available in buildings from 33,000 sq ft. Planning consent has been granted for the city centre scheme.

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News supplier loses prime international customer

## Cold winds blow through ITN

You could call ITN an endangered species if it were not the only one of its kind. That's the trouble. How does anything unique prepare for the next generation?

Independent Television News (to give it the full name that no one ever uses) suffered a body blow last week when it lost its contract of nearly ten years with NBC Super Channel. The loss of £1 million a year from September will hurt. But something more is going: ITN World News's best showcase on the international market.

ITN does have other foreign customers — certain airlines and Channel 9 in Australia — but these are small fry compared to NBC. Worse, what NBC decided, in dropping ITN bulletins from its pan-European satellite and cable channel, is something that other television services might also come to decide — that they want to reposition their service towards more entertainment and that they will provide a specialised business channel themselves.

If only ITN had a serene future at home. But no. Its main customer, ITV, sees its other two big customers, Channels 4 and 5, as rivals. ITN's security of tenure with all three rests on the nod of the Independent Television Commission, and it is under enormous pressure to cut costs.

Pity may seem wasted when lavished on a well-managed organisation with an operating profit of nearly 20 per cent and a turnover of nearly £90 million. But anyone would feel sorry for a business heavily dependent on one surly customer whose contract runs out next year. (The deal between ITN and the ITV companies expires on December 31, 1997, although it may well be extended.) And if you are a British viewer, reliant on this adored news service, you begin to worry about its vulnerability.

ITN seems certain to have to lower the price it charges ITV for its news. Those ITV companies who are no longer ITN shareholders (they used to be by law until 1993) feel they are being milked for the benefit of the shareholders, as well as of their competitors, Channels 4 and 5.

The annual bill, £57 million, for ITN's News at 12.40, 5.40 and 7.15, they complain, far too high. In reply ITN has offered a cut to £42 million if the various ITV companies pick up the expenses for ITN in their regions. Can bed and breakfast in the provinces really cost that much? No matter. Even that whopping discount is unlikely to satisfy some of the disgruntled ITV companies. They would prefer to buy their

national and international news from a rival source, such as BSkyB, the satellite service part-owned by News International, owner of The Times. If only the Independent Television Commission would recognise a second news provider.

Further cost-cutting pressure comes from the shareholders. There are two views of the consequences. One insists that ITN is ridiculously overmanned and extravagant, and that it will emerge the better for trimming. The other is that the cuts have gone so far that ITN is no longer a serious news-gathering organisation, that it is not investing enough in new technology and that the separate identity of Channel 4's Seven O'Clock News is being sacrificed as shades of the BBC World Service. ITN is shunting news staffs together "to reap the benefits of the centralising resource teams".

ITN's current owners (Carlton, Granada, Reuters, United News, Daily Mail and Scottish Television) obviously believe they can have economics and profits, too. They probably also believe that they can sustain the high quality which has won countless awards, put brave ITN faces like Penny Marshall in the troubled corners of the world, and made Trevor McDonald and Jon Snow (to my mind) the most respected newsmen in the land.

But the owners cannot have any illusion that there is a big global news market beckoning from beyond these shores. News is expensive, and international news, barring disasters, hard to sell. One country's big story is another's big yawn.

Anyway, CNN International has probably scooped what there is of a world market for 24-hour news in English. Its 30 news bureaus, its many weather reports from Madagascar and downtown Seoul, and its bevy of gorgeous, slightly accented newsmen are very welcome on the screen of a bleak hotel room in Shanghai or Bangalore, at least until the business news comes on. (They probably change it every day but I'm not convinced.) And it has taken CNN's costly years just to get its international advertising revenue to reach an annual \$53 million.

Those people marching around to "Save the World Service" really ought to spare a prayer for ITN. The quality of its service bears watching. ITN is a curious British creature which has flourished under very controlled conditions, otherwise known as monopoly. You can like monopoly, or loathe it. But you can't pretend that ITN got as good as it is without it.



BRENDA MADDOX

## Election fever for Express

AFTER years of spasm-like devotion to John Major and the Conservative Party, staff at the Daily Express will face a confusing time when the general election is finally announced.

While their newsdesks will no doubt be requiring them to dabble their fingers deep into the personal lives of Tony Blair and the Shadow Cabinet in an attempt to boost Mr Major's chances, their socialist millionaire owner Lord Hollick has other ideas.

Lord Hollick, chief executive of MAI, which recently merged with the Express stable's United News and Media, has announced to management that as soon as the first shots are fired in the election battle he will be heading straight for Walworth Road, where he will lend his mighty weight to the Labour campaign. Lord Hollick, whose



Testing times ahead: Lord Hollick and Lord Stevens

partnership with United's Tory chairman Lord Stevens has been likened to the marriage of Michael Jackson and Lisa Marie Presley, always insisted that despite boarding the Express's true-blue train his dedication to the Labour Party would remain intact.

But staff at Blackfriars anticipate that, come the election campaign, he will fly. "If the Express treats Tony Blair like it treated Neil Kinnock during the last election, I fear Lord Hollick may not always see the funny side," said one.

women have been largely wasted. Car companies will be less than delighted to learn that not only did the ads get on their nerves, but many could not even remember that they were advertising a car.

### No comment...

NEWS reaches The Listener that that troubled ship the Financial Times is now casting its net around Canary Wharf in an effort to bring about a change in its fortunes.

Three months after making the first compulsory redundancies in 100 years, and after staff gave a vote of no confidence in the Editor, Richard Lambert, the FT is rumoured to be trawling the offices of The Daily Telegraph in search of its shrewd City editor, Neil Collins.

Collins, who has his own entry in Debut's People of Today, is now understood to be being courted for a major position in the group.

Only a few weeks ago Collins was at the centre of more headhunting gossip when he was apparently sounded out by the Stock

Exchange for a high profile position. It was rumoured that following the deluge of critical articles Collins had written about the Stock Exchange, it was considered prudent to have him on side.

### In the picture

STILL over at Canary Wharf, an article in last week's Sunday Telegraph is causing smirks throughout the office. A lofty piece headlined "Princess vs the paparazzi" told how the press ratpack is besieging the Princess of Wales at a French villa and had a News of the World reporter grumbling that he was not being allowed to invade her privacy.

Alongside it was an illustrative picture of five journalists kicking their heels outside the villa.

But what The Sunday Telegraph article fails to mention is that its own news editor Chris Anderson is himself a former News of the World man or that the main face in the picture was none other than Robert Hardman, distinguished writer at their flagship paper, The Daily Telegraph.

## Using the oldest trick in the book



Eva Herzigova brought increased sales for Wonderbra

SEX sells — or rather the judicious use of sex in advertising can help to boost the sales of certain products.

This snappy conclusion was reached at a Marketing Society conference last week. The society took a look at 1995's most famous sexy campaigns — Club 18-30 and Wonderbra — and scrutinised how both achieved maximum effect with minimal budgets.

Delegates were told TBWA's shrewd use of model Eva Herzigova enhanced Wonderbra's meagre £650,000 adspend, inflating sales by 41 per cent on the previous year, while Club 18-30, spending a mere £350,000 through Saatchi and Saatchi, achieved a 35 per cent climb on the previous year.

These enviable case studies were compared with dismal attempts by other advertisers to hijack similarly saucy images and working for their own supposed commercial

gain. "We showed that you can use sex to sell if it is relevant to the product, but that it doesn't work where it is inappropriate to the brand or gratuitous," said a society spokesman.

HOOPER'S HOOSH, the controversial alcoholic lemonade from Bass which gained notoriety for supposedly encouraging under-age drinking, gains its first advertising agency this week.

The three finalists, Euro RSCG, Duckworth Finn Grubb Waters and DMB&B find out today who is to be charged with moving the brand on to its next stage.

It should be interesting to see how a smart above-the-line shop continues the role that below-the-line and PR has, to date, managed with such aplomb — achieving one

of the biggest marketing successes in the alcoholic drinks sector for ten years.

J. WALTER THOMPSON staged an audacious training conference for about 20 of its clients last week on "How to do better in advertising".

The gist of the sessions was to educate the assembled advertisers about the vagaries and mysteries of the advertising process. They learnt how to conduct pitches, dream up creative ideas and negotiate terms with media owners — all of which were judged by JWT's very own in-house experts.

"There was no hidden agenda. We weren't trying to blind them with science or make them go away thinking 'Blimey, it's complicated stuff, this advertising business'," said David Kinneer, JWT's marketing manager.

BELINDA ARCHER

### SENIOR SALES ASSOCIATES

SALARY NEGOTIABLE

OUR FAMOUS SILVER, JEWELLERY AND GIFT STORES ARE SEEKING STAFF OF THE HIGHEST CALIBRE.

IF YOU'RE A DYNAMIC, FAST-TRACK SALES PERSON WITH AN IN-DEPTH KNOWLEDGE OF JEWELLERY AND WATCHES, YOU COULD JOIN THE TEAM OF SALES EXPERTS AT ONE OF OUR PRESTIGIOUS STORES THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY.

HIGHLY MOTIVATED AND CAPABLE OF MEETING SET TARGETS, YOU WILL BE AN EXCELLENT COMMUNICATOR WITH THE PASSION AND ENTHUSIASM TO LEAD BY EXAMPLE WITHIN A SMALL SALES TEAM.

BECAUSE WE WANT THE MOST TALENTED PEOPLE IN OUR COMPANY, WE ARE OFFERING A VERY ATTRACTIVE PACKAGE INCLUDING A COMPETITIVE SALARY PLUS COMMISSION AND GENEROUS BENEFITS.

PLEASE WRITE ENCLOSED A FULL CV, INDICATING SALARY EXPECTATIONS, TO MARIA HORN, MAPPIN & WEBB, 413 OXFORD STREET, LONDON W1R 1FG. CLOSING DATE: 8TH AUGUST 1996.

MAPPIN & WEBB

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Manager required for the extremely successful residential lettings department based at our Chichester branch. Applicants must be experienced. This opportunity would also suit hard working graduates with drive and ambition. An excellent package including bonus scheme and one for the successful applicant. Please call Karen Ryan on 01243-995-5439 or 01243-997-5777.

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Private company seeking to expand. Following highly successful launch year of 1995, we require graduates or those of second academic background, to be trained to the highest possible standards with view of full profit participation within 2/3 years. For further details, call:

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### World Telecom plc

is one of the fastest growing telecommunications companies in Europe, operating at the leading edge of the industry. Only two years old, they have a large and growing list of blue chip clients and partners and are looking for high calibre people to help them implement the next phase in their expansion and prepare for Stock Exchange flotation within two years. Telecommunications experience is, of course, helpful, but not essential.

### FINANCIAL CONTROLLER

A Chartered Accountant to take control of the whole accounting function, improve existing systems and procedures and expand the Accounts Department. Role is unlikely to be over 40, will have a successful track record, be interested in a challenge, and be prepared to commit themselves to the success of World Telecom. The initial period of the role will be in the £40,000 to £50,000 range, but this is expected to rise rapidly and share options will also have a considerable impact.

### PRODUCT SALES MANAGERS

Will take overall responsibility for the marketing, sales, administration, management and development of three new and exciting telecommunications products. Initially at specific business related sites, but ultimately offered to a wide market. They will have sales and marketing experience and sound administrative and management skills. Remuneration package £20,000 - £25,000.

### SALES PEOPLE

### AND ACCOUNT MANAGERS

Sales people will win new accounts and account managers will make sure that we keep them. Both will have a successful record in sales, be professional, and friendly manner. Experience is not essential but a minimum of 2 years sales experience is essential. They will have sales and marketing experience and sound administrative and management skills. Remuneration package £20,000 - £25,000 (plus car, and) in the first year. Much more thereafter.

### CUSTOMER SERVICES

We need people who can assist our clients over the phone in a professional, and friendly manner. Experience is not essential but a minimum of 2 years customer service experience is essential. They will have sales and marketing experience and sound administrative and management skills. Remuneration package £20,000 - £25,000 (plus car, and) in the first year. Much more thereafter.

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## European Corporate Communications Director

Attractive salary + benefits

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Dell Computer Corporation has an exceptional story to tell. We need an exceptional person to tell it.

At Dell, we do things differently. Over the past five years our direct business model has achieved a compounded annual growth rate exceeding 50% per annum - double that of the personal computer market. Over the last two years, our market position in Europe has grown from 11th to 5th, with revenues last year of \$1.48bn from our operations in 15 countries.

As European Corporate Communications Director, reporting to the Senior Vice President, Europe, Middle-East and Africa, your brief will be to ensure that Dell's unique business approach and leadership position is recognised and understood by key business and IT decision makers throughout Europe.

Your profile:

- strong commercial acumen to quickly understand our business

- model and market dynamics
- extensive experience of developing and executing sophisticated Pan European corporate communications strategies in a dynamic environment
- proven ability to form effective working relationships with corporate senior management from diverse cultural backgrounds both in the USA and Europe
- highly self motivated with an extremely hands-on, pragmatic and results-orientated work style
- fluency in English and preferably one or more European language

Needless to say, we are offering an exceptional remuneration package.

To apply, please send your CV, quoting reference 07/939/ST to Dell Computer's European Executive Staffing Manager, c/o LIA Recruitment Management, 12 Celbridge Mews, Porchester Road, London W2 6EU. Telephone: 00 44 171 243 1888. Fax: 00 44 171 792 9016.

## Marketing manager

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A Marketing Manager is required to strengthen the senior management team and to drive and control the implementation of marketing strategy to fulfil the agreed business objectives as well as identify new and innovative business opportunities. A significant degree of travel will be involved.

Candidates will have a degree, or equivalent, in a computer science or engineering discipline, good technical knowledge encompassing IT systems/software, structured processes and MIS, direct people/project management experience and proven skills in selling £1m+ million systems successfully to the highest level.

To apply, please send your CV and salary details, quoting reference number 7258, to Margaret-Anne Stocker, P.E. Search & Selection, Park House, Wick Road, Egham, Surrey TW20 0HW.

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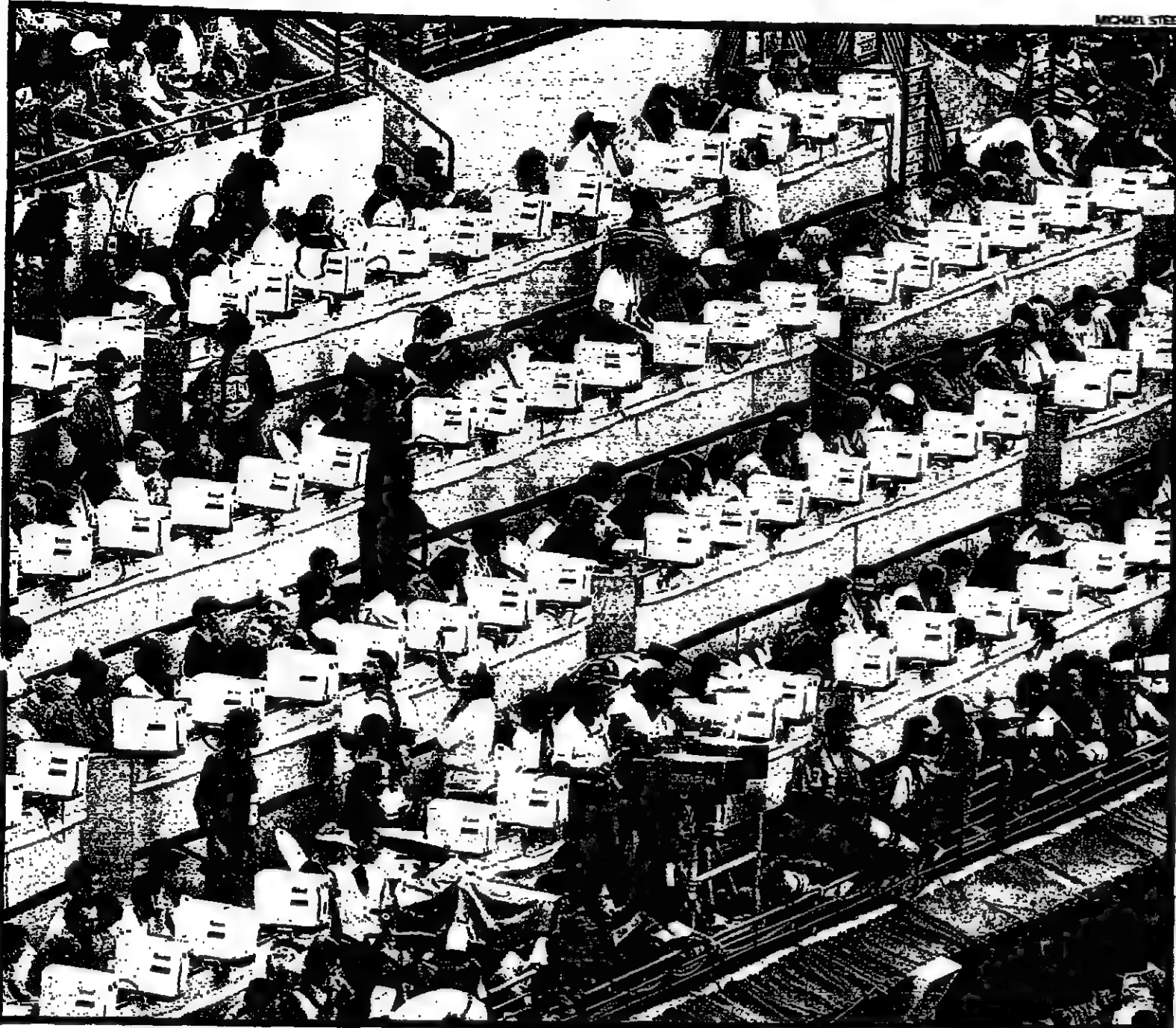
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## John Goodbody is battling to stay in the media race at the Games



Journalists get ready for the opening ceremony in Atlanta, minus one group who were driven into a scrapyard instead of the main stadium

## Atlanta wins for chaos

A sigh of envy is always audible when I inform acquaintances that I am about to report the Olympic Games. Usually they volunteer to come as my assistant, or then, it is like having three weeks' holiday in the most luxurious hotel on the French Riviera and being paid for the experience. I am sorry to disillusion them: this is not how it is in Atlanta.

All Olympic Games, whose venues are spread over many hundreds of miles, are difficult to cover, even for *The Times*, which has sent 12 reporters plus freelancers. The long hours are made worse by the time difference. However, it is the pressure that is so wearing, as 17,000 members of the media, including 5,000 reporters, battle to get results, quotes, places on buses, places in the stands and, above all, better stories, all against the deadlines of editions. As Bob Brennan, the press chief, says of the huge number of journalists who have arrived: "Now I know what a tidal wave looks like and smells like."

The Olympics are one of the most demanding assignments for any journalist. When I was woken up at 4.40am in Seoul in 1988 to be informed that Ben Johnson had found positive for drugs after the 100 metres, I had 50 minutes to confirm the truth of the story and write 650 words for the front page.

However, what is making

these Games particularly exhausting is the inefficiency of the organisation. Of all the eight summer Games that I have covered, I have never observed so much frustration and even anger from fellow journalists.

You could better understand the problems if the United States did not pride itself on leading the world in efficient

## A French fencer was credited with the 400m record

use of both technology and human resources. For journalists, these Games are, in many ways, worse organised than Barcelona, Seoul and Moscow, the last three Olympics staged outside North America.

Yet Atlanta starts with so many advantages. The hotels are superb. Ample food is available at any time. The people are pleasant and there is no language problem. Calls to Britain are simple.

Of course, access to the competitors has become increasingly awkward. Like so many sports events, the Olympics now consist of bland

formal press conferences rather than informative personal briefings. Atlanta cannot be blamed for this. However, the organisers have particularly failed in providing an adequate transport and results service.

The accreditation process was the worst of any important sports event that I have covered anywhere in the world. On arrival at Hartsfield airport, journalists, competitors and Games officials were herded together to have their documents verified.

Horror stories abounded. I arrived at 9.15pm and only took two hours to be processed. Marc Aspland, the *Times* photographer, who arrived in mid-afternoon, took five hours. Competitors, many of whom had travelled from across the world, suffered equally, just before the most important competition of their lives.

The journey to the accommodation was often circuitous, largely because many of the drivers were not from Atlanta and did not know the area. For the opening ceremony, one group of journalists found themselves being driven into a scrapyard instead of the main stadium. The driver politely explained she did not know the way. The journey back from the Olympic stadium took this group more than three hours, a distance which could have been walked in 50 minutes.

It is little wonder that the world's oarsmen went on

strike and had a sit-down in the Olympic Village because of the transport.

Although the International Olympic Committee has ordered the organisers to improve the transport, there is only a certain amount that can be done. Several streets have been closed in the centre of Atlanta and the increase of traffic because of the Games

## Americans thought they could take the Games in their stride

has resulted in huge jams. A crucial error was also made when the organisers, for the first time ever for the Games, put the central bus depot a 15-minute drive away from the main press centre. Everyone therefore has to change buses at least once before they start their journeys to venues which can then take up to three hours.

Transport has always caused difficulties at the Olympics, if not on the scale of Atlanta. But at least I expected an efficient results service. With IBM having invested £50 million to be a worldwide

Olympic sponsor and the lead "technology integrator" of the Games, journalists expected a quick, accurate service.

Yet results have been late and often wrong. One medal, won on Sunday, was not reported until 12 hours later. Reuters has had to warn its thousands of subscribers about problems and has begun compiling many of the results manually. Bob Brennan admits that when he was searching through the biography of a French fencer, he found he was credited with the world record for 400 metres.

Many people think the trouble lies in the Americans' belief that they could take the Games in their stride, rather than raising themselves to the challenge as many smaller countries would have done. They simply cannot cope with massive numbers of foreigners all demanding information. There is excessive bureaucracy and inflexibility of thought. Decisions get bogged down and people have been unable to adapt to the requirements of the world's biggest sporting festival.

A.D. Fraser, the chief finance officer for the Games, admits that there are problems. He compares the difficulty in getting new instructions carried out with the behaviour of a dinosaur. "The head sends a message and ten minutes later the tail wags." But with these organisers the message does not take minutes; sometimes it takes days.

There is no better way of reviving a flagging dinner party than by asking friends if they support Charles or Di. We all have an opinion, even Nobel prizewinners, according to Holden (and since you ask I'm more for Charles than Di). Yet in the past week, apart from Jonathan Dimbleby in *The Sunday Telegraph* (a paper that is usually an avid supporter of the Princess) there have been no articles in support of Prince Charles and only a few anti-Diana articles.

Quite the most venomous was by Richard Littlejohn writing in the *Daily Mail*. "Diana has always manipulated her charity 'work' to fit her own personal agenda and upstage her husband, right down to the last stage-managed tear and expensive, cleavage-enhancing frock..."

## Why the BBC finally accepts that age does matter

ONE of the great joys of being a BBC insider is knowing that *One Foot in the Grave*, the Tarrina of "yok" TV, attracted a disproportionately high audience of old age pensioners.

The corporation is now targeting the people who watch more television than any other age group with a new season of special programmes exploring what being elderly means today.

Clare Patterson, its executive producer, was influenced by her mother turning 60 and collecting her bus pass. "I'm not sure old age today is reflected adequately on the box," she says.

"Older people are probably not there enough, particularly older women. They are not reflected in all their diversity."

Her contribution, *Coming of Age*, is a fortnight of programmes on BBC2 next month including a two-part David Dimbleby documentary on global ageing and a succession of grilling by Professor Anthony Clare of elderly achievers like Lord Deedes, Sir John Harvey Jones and Doris Lessing.

The fact that older people still make love is also acknowledged in a 50-minute investigation entitled *Grey Sex*.

But if Ms Patterson hopes her season will lead to an increase in honest images of old age on the small screen, she will be disappointed.

Victor Meldrew, the grumpy subject of *One Foot in the Grave*, is the most familiar image of old age on our screens, but he infuriates many campaigners on behalf of the elderly. Pat Sears, 75, who sits on the executive of Age Concern, says: "He is a caricature isn't he?" Gilly Crosby, of the Centre for Policy on Ageing says: "The whole image is very negative." Alison Rose, of Help The Aged, agrees. "People might think all older people are complaining. He is probably not a very good role model."

The BBC has the perfect excuse: it does not accept that Victor Meldrew is an image of an older person, just a redundant one. "He is not that old," says a spokeswoman. "It is about a man who all sorts of extraordinary things happen to. He could have been any age."

The comedy series *Waiting For God* won universal acclaim for the authenticity of its portrayal of life in a retirement village: sex, death, decrepitude and all. This was no accident. "I got on to Age Concern and virtually became their propaganda arm for five years," says Michael Aitkens, the writer.

Before each series, he asked what issues the pressure group wanted exposed, then wrote sketches around topics like prostheses and bus passes. He won plaudits for including a bedroom scene but admits he was unaware for

The aged feel they have not been catered for on screen, reports Dominic Kennedy

years that the people he was writing about still indulged. "I was into my third series before a Scottish doctor told me that in these places, parties and sex are uppermost in their minds," he said. "It struck a huge chord when they got into the sack together. I felt ashamed that I hadn't thought of it until then."

*Waiting For God* was inspired by his anger watching

40 you don't change brands." He is scathing about *The Golden Girls*, America's feelgood sitcom concerning Florida matrons, which won big audiences here for Channel 4, delighting advertisers. "That was just three chicks sharing a house and dating," he says. "It was very funny but they never discussed incontinence or breast cancer or anything like that."

Carla Lane, creator of the formidable and vituperative Grandad in the 1980s sitcom *Bread*, says comedy writers are under increasing pressure to deliver lots of laughs. The easiest way is to write about sex. "That is sad," she says, "and inhibits you writing about old people because they don't talk about sex and that's part of their dignity. The poignancy of old people is lovely but there certainly isn't enough of it. If you wrote it, would the powers-that-be accept it, because everything has changed? One is under pressure to make people laugh loudly and often. The subtle stories are going."

"I have a struggle getting over my rather miserable comedy. People like it but heads of department don't. Television has become big business like everything in this world. It's nothing to do with being creative any more and taking chances and saying 'We may not get the viewers but it's a lovely thing, let's do it.' John Birt and Alan Yentob are frightened of making decisions."

An unpublished survey of 1,200 older people by the Anchor housing association two months ago found only 30 per cent were happy with the way they were portrayed on television.

The over-65s have particular tastes that the new commercial channels will find hard to indulge. Viewing figures so far this year show they prefer *Antiques Roadshow* to *Coronation Street* and *Songs of Praise* to *Blind Date*.

Among older viewers resorting to the off-button is George Melly, 69, who believes he was awfully lucky to have been a television critic during the 1960s, when he recalls reviewing marvellous plays and wonderful documentaries. "Today," he says, pausing over a good book before going out on the town for a night of singing, "I only watch nature shows and *Antiques Roadshow*."



Wrong image? One Foot in the Grave

the demise of his elderly mother but he killed the show after five series because there are only so many laughs in old age and then it stops being funny. His mother has reached the stage where she reports her minders to the police and has difficulty remembering who the members of her family are. As Mr Aitkens says: "You can't make jokes about Alzheimer's."

The BBC was brave enough to launch *Waiting For God* in 1990 but the increasing commercial pressure on television, including the imperative to sell shows abroad, makes such future experiments less likely. Mr Aitkens says: "I am trying to launch it in America but they are saying 'How can we get the youth market?' There is a huge audience among the elderly. They watch TV more than anyone but the advertisers only want audiences between 20 and 40 because after

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## Has the Palace's decision to strip the Princess of Wales of her HRH backfired?

When the Princess of Wales returns to London today from her holiday with Fergie in the south of France, she will find that she has scored another victory over the Royal Family, and again outwitted all the sleek advisers to the Queen and Prince Charles.

The decision to strip the Princess of the title Her Royal Highness — even though it was she who first offered to relinquish it, according to the usual "trusted sources" — has become Buckingham Palace's biggest public-relations disaster yet.

Across the political spectrum, editors and commentators have been unusually united in condemning the decision. Letters to editors have disclosed a swelling disenchantment with Prince Charles, an aversion to Camilla Parker Bowles and, more damaging, unusually vituperative criticism of the Queen, particularly among her most loyal subjects — elderly, royalist women.

Princess Diana has even managed to survive her own public-relations gaffe when she announced last week that she was severing her connection with 100 charities. It had been planned for weeks but was quickly spin-doctored into a reaction to the loss of

## A vexed question of who should curtsy to whom

her title. Even so, even her most loyal Fleet Street supporters condemned her self-pity, petulance and pique. The Princess should have a care, said the *Daily Mail*. Revenge and charity did not mix well.

Yet as Keith Waterhouse observed in the same paper, she is the "Houdini of the House of Windsor" who always manages to come up smelling of roses.

One of the most forthright critics of the Palace was Anthony Holden. "The royal display of cold, calculating ruthlessness has been breathtaking," he said in the *Daily Express*. "In the past... I have compared the Windsors with the Borgias in their grim determination to hang on to everything at all costs. The brutality of this latest exercise of power is worthy of Coppola's *Corleones*."

That criticism was shared by Paul Johnson in the *Daily Mail* and William Rees-Mogg in *The Times*. John-



PAPER ROUND Brian MacArthur

son's main target was Prince Charles. The divorce had forced on Diana was an insult to loyal Anglicans and angered many other Christians, especially Catholics. The Queen's decision, which Charles had failed to prevent, was a deliberate blow to the family principle. To Rees-Mogg, the decision looked "mean and ill-judged" but the title was likely to be restored eventually when her son William became king.

Holden received a record posting and was surprised by the vehemence of the support he got from middle England. The letters spoke of "the obnoxious Palace hierarchy". "Charles and his

dreadful family", described the Prince as "a liar and a cheat", and attacked the Queen as "petty, small-minded, selfish, unprincipled and spiteful".

Sun readers responded in the same disgusted manner, according to its Editor, Stuart Higgins. They saw the Queen's decision as "uncharacteristically cruel and callous", inspired by a desire for revenge on a Princess who had done more to harm the Royal Family than to harm it. More than 60,000 readers had signed a *Daily Mirror* petition urging the Queen to restore the HRH title, the paper announced yesterday. The letters in support ex-

pressed an equal measure of shock at the treatment of the Princess.

There is no better way of reviving a flagging dinner party than by asking friends if they support Charles or Di. We all have an opinion, even Nobel prizewinners, according to Holden (and since you ask I'm more for Charles than Di). Yet in the past week, apart from Jonathan Dimbleby in *The Sunday Telegraph* (a paper that is usually an avid supporter of the Princess) there have been no articles in support of Prince Charles and only a few anti-Diana articles.

Quite the most venomous was by Richard Littlejohn writing in the *Daily Mail*. "Diana has always manipulated her charity 'work' to fit her own personal agenda and upstage her husband, right down to the last stage-managed tear and expensive, cleavage-enhancing frock..."







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BUSINESS EDITOR Lindsay Cook

WEDNESDAY JULY 24 1996

## Bank moves to plug flaws exposed by Barings collapse

By ROBERT MILLER

THE Bank of England will today announce wide-ranging reforms that are intended to remedy deficiencies exposed by the £830 million collapse of Barings.

The Bank will respond to criticism of its role in supervising Barings before the crash, when it publishes a nine-month review of supervision, conducted by Arthur Andersen, the accountant.

A key aspect of the review is expected to embrace methods used by the Bank's supervision and

surveillance departments in monitoring and retaining staff. It is also expected to cover the range and level of training and qualification available to supervisors within the Bank.

The Board of Banking Supervision, an independent arm of the Bank, was accused yesterday by a former Barings executive of bowing to "commercial reality and political pressure" in compiling its report into the Barings collapse. Ron Baker, previously head of Barings' financial products group, told the Commons Treasury Select Committee that the conclusions in the board

report were "biased and politically motivated". They were biased by "commercial reality and political pressure". He added that the committee would be "forever damned by the conclusions of that report".

Afterwards Mr Baker said: "I answered questions about Nick Leeson's trading in the bogus five-figure account. Then when I said I was unable to comment on his illicit trading this was portrayed wrongly in the report as a lack of understanding on my part of his authorised dealing activities." Ian Hopkins, former head of

Barings' Asian operations, also delivered a damning indictment at yesterday's hearing on the lack of supervision and risk controls at Barings Securities. He was also critical of the report saying that he had been "very badly let down", even though he had acted as a "whistleblower" over his concerns about the risk controls, or lack of them, months before the crash.

Mr Hopkins said that had Peter Norris, previously chief executive officer, accepted his proposal for a treasurer to be appointed to the bank's Asian operations in 1994,

it might not have collapsed. "Even though it was technically bankrupt by that stage, I found myself pretty much a lone voice at meetings at which there was a lot of table banging and shouting and raised voices. I did everything I could in a difficult and hostile environment."

He said that the reason given for not sending a treasurer to check on the Far East operations was one of cost and that such a role was not in the annual £200,000 budget.

When pressed by MPs, Mr Hopkins said he thought that Mr Norris

"took my points as being critical of the structure he put in place". That structure, he indicated, hid a "raft" of serious reconciliation problems not solely related to Leeson's fraudulent trading.

Both Mr Hopkins and Mr Baker said they believed they had been wrongly cast as the two executives most responsible for failing to detect Leeson's activities. Mr Baker said it was "probably easier to blame a bearded Australian (himself) than other more senior directors."

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## CBI pleads case for a cautious Budget

By PHILIP BASSETT, INDUSTRIAL EDITOR

KENNETH CLARKE, the Chancellor, was urged yesterday to prepare a "cautious" Budget, on the basis of new evidence from industry showing a modest improvement in manufacturing, including an increase in business confidence for the first time in more than a year.

The latest Confederation of British Industry quarterly trends survey showed increases in orders and output. But business leaders gave warning that the pace of improvement was "by no means assured", and pressed the Chancellor against any further changes in interest rates.

The survey suggests that employment is still falling, with a balance of 17 per cent of companies saying that they are cutting jobs — 18,000 in the last three months, and probably 23,000 in the next quarter, the CBI said.

Government ministers welcomed the CBI survey as clear evidence of economic improvement, though CBI leaders were considerably more tentative about its results, suggesting that while they indicated manufacturing was beginning to revive, it was still not performing as well as other sectors of the economy.

Andrew Buxton, chairman of the CBI's economic affairs committee and of Barclays Bank, said: "Manufacturing activity is beginning to pick up after grinding to a halt at the beginning of this year."

While he cited increases in business confidence, and manufacturers' expectations of rising domestic and export orders, he gave warning that "the strength of the expected bounce-back in manufacturing demand and output is not a foregone conclusion — with firms' expectations disappointed over the past year."

Nevertheless, Angela Knight, the Treasury's Economic Secretary, said: "The survey confirms a growing mood of optimism among manufacturers. Output, orders, optimism and investment are all up, while prices are down — and expected to stay down."

Labour welcomed any signs of improvement in manufacturing, but Margaret Beckett, the Shadow Trade and Industry Secretary, said: "It would be premature to take this slight increase in confidence as unmitigated good news because the survey makes clear two more worrying indicators: the percentage of firms planning to invest in capacity expansion has fallen, and jobs in manufacturing are being lost at their fastest rate for two years."

CBI leaders said that strengthening retail sales suggested the possible emergence of a "feel-better" factor, which has been "conspicuously absent" so far in the recovery, but warned that there was still a gap between this and the reassurance of the full "feel-good" factor.

The CBI said that the survey indicated a "very difficult background" for any moves towards lower taxes, insisting that tax cuts in the Budget would have to be matched by reductions in spending.

Kate Barker, the CBI's chief economic adviser, said that while the survey showed a slip back into recession in manufacturing had been avoided, its findings "would strengthen the case for a cautious Budget".

On interest rates, the CBI said that based on the survey's findings there was no case for rates to be cut since manufacturing was improving — but no case for them to be raised either since there were still no inflationary pressures coming from industry.

The CBI said that in the past four months total new orders rose at the highest rate since July 1995, mainly because of a modest increase in business from abroad. But domestic orders were virtually flat, although demand for consumer goods increased more markedly on the back of strengthening high street sales.

But it gave warning against over-optimism and cautioned that firms were still threatened by the uncertain outlook for key European export markets, and that output might be held back by a continued backlog of unsold stocks.



Ray Nethercott, whose £50,000 stake in the Allied Carpets buyout, five years ago, was worth £3.5 million yesterday after the company's flotation

By SARAH CUNNINGHAM

SHARES in Allied Carpets romped to a 199 premium on their first day of trading, closing at 234p.

For 160 Allied Carpets employees who invested at the height of the recession, five years ago, when Ray Nethercott, managing director, led a management buyout from Lowndes Queensway, their investments have risen 75-fold. A £5,000 investment then was worth £400,000 last night. Mr Nethercott borrowed £50,000

## Shares in Allied Carpets off to a premium start

to put in the business, and that investment was worth £3.2 million at yesterday's flotation price, rising to £3.5 million.

A total of 500 staff now hold nearly 11 per cent of the company, with the average stake worth nearly £42,500.

Allied Carpets came to mar-

ket at a big discount to the rival Carpetright. Concerned by recent difficulties of new issues such as Jarvis Hotels and British Energy, the company priced its shares at the low end of its 205p-to-235p indicated range.

Carpetright shares also shot

ahead, ending 23p up, at 547p, after an upbeat report on trading from Lord Harris, chairman and chief executive. He reported sales up 33 per cent in the first 12 weeks of this financial year. However, analysts said that much of the growth was from new

Carpetright stores, and suggested that like-for-like sales growth was probably in single figures and in line with sales of other household goods.

Rivalry between Allied Carpets and Carpetright is set to become more acute. John Richards, retail analyst with NatWest Markets, said that the two may find it increasingly hard to grab market share from independent retailers, whom customers often favour for their personal service.

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## Mersey Docks regains contract lost in strike

By CARL MORTIMER

MERSEY DOCKS and Harbour Company has secured the return of Atlantic Container Lines, the American shipping company that quit the Port of Liverpool last month after pressure from US dockworkers acting in sympathy with strikers in the United Kingdom.

However, Mersey Docks is unlikely to reinstate an £8 million payment offered to strikers, worth about £25,000 per employee, that was withdrawn when ACL originally pulled out.

ACL confirmed yesterday that it would be resuming its twice weekly service from New York and Baltimore to Liverpool the shipping company transferred the business to Thamesport after threats that its vessels would be blacked in US ports. A Mersey

Docks spokesman said an ACL vessel was expected to unload a cargo in Liverpool today.

Shares in Mersey Docks rose 10 per cent to 363p on news that ACL, which accounted for some £12 million in revenue, was returning to the port.

Mersey Docks sacked 80 workers when the American shipowner pulled out and the port operator cancelled its £8 million settlement to 329 strikers who were dismissed last year. The February offer, worth about £25,000 per man, was rejected in a mass meeting. Since the dismissals, the company has hired other staff and it claims productivity improvements.

The Liverpool strikers recently mounted a protest in the Port of Montreal by occupying

a crane in a failed attempt to influence CAST, another customer of Mersey Docks.

ACL's resumption of its service is the second time that the shipping line has quit the port and returned after action by strikers.

Mersey Docks last month launched court proceedings against the International Longshoremen's Association of America alleging that the union unlawfully caused Atlantic Container Lines to break its contract.

The docks dispute originated when 329 Mersey Docks employees joined a picket line in sympathy with 80 workers sacked from a separate strike during February. They were demanding compensation from Mersey Docks.

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## Northern Rock's float fees at £2m

By SARA MCCONNELL

NORTHERN ROCK Building Society, which yesterday appointed House Govett as stockbroker for its proposed conversion to a bank in the autumn of 1997, said that it has already spent £2 million on work for the conversion, mainly on advisers' fees.

Price Waterhouse and JP Morgan are already advising the society. Members will be balloted next spring on conversion and the setting up of a charitable foundation, to be funded by a proportion of the society's pre-tax profits.

Pre-tax profits for the six months to June 30 were 10 per cent up on last year, at £96 million. Gross mortgage lending rose by 47 per cent, to £1.6 billion, from £1.08 billion. Net lending was up 77 per cent, at £1.15 billion.

## Halifax cuts 1,200 head office jobs

By ROBERT MILLER

THE Halifax Building Society, which is preparing for flotation, is to shed 1,200 head office jobs. The society, which is seeking improvements in efficiency after its merger with the Leeds Permanent last year, also said it expected to create 1,000 jobs in general insurance over the next 18 months.

The cuts, however, were attacked by the Independent Union of Halifax Staff, which accused the Halifax of "cannibalising" the effect of the job losses. Ged Nichols, general secretary of the Halifax union, which earlier this month became affiliated to the TUC, said: "Job losses were to be expected after the merger with the Leeds Permanent Building Society last year."

However, the prospect that over the next 18 months 1,000 new jobs may be created

within general insurance activities and Halifax Direct should not be confused with those who are going to lose their posts now. We have secured the promise that there will be no compulsory redundancies and improved early retirement terms. Even so, there are a lot of worried people out there tonight."

Halifax said: "The aim has been to cut out unnecessary cost and establish the right level of support for future growth and development."

The society said that, over the next 18 months, 1,200 jobs "will be phased out". It added: "The net position is that by the end of 1997 there will be about 200 fewer jobs in the head office locations."

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## Stagecoach ready to bid for rest of rail franchises

By FRASER NELSON

STAGECOACH, Britain's biggest private bus operator, said yesterday it will bid for all 12 of Britain's remaining rail franchises.

Announcing record pre-tax profits up 34 per cent at £43.6 million for the year to April 30, Stagecoach, where Ann Gloag is managing director, said it was on the shortlist for the Cardiff Valley and south-east England franchises, and aimed to have a railway portfolio with a turnover between £400 million and £500 million.

The group already owns South West Railways, which has an annualised turnover of £260 million.

Brian Souter, executive chairman, said the decision to go for all of the franchises was primarily a safety measure. "If you bid for them all, you are more likely to pick one up," he said.

Passenger volumes on South West Railways increased 7 per cent, which Mr Souter said was helped by the group's decision to keep fares increases below inflation. More trains have been planned for the route in winter.

Its bus division increased passenger volume by 1 per cent, despite a national tread away from bus travel. The group is also to expand its articulated bus service across Britain. At present, two of its 60-foot, 72-seat buses run between Glasgow and Anstruther. It has ordered ten more, to service routes through Lanarkshire, Blackpool and Grimsby, among others.

Turnover rose by 48 per cent to £501 million, helped by a £24.4 million contribution from its four bus acquisitions. The group gained a £15 million profit from selling its 22 per cent stake in Strathclyde Buses, lifting cash assets from £8.44 million to £70.8 million. Gearing fell from 140 per cent to 110 per cent.

The final dividend is 4.6p, bringing the total for the year to 6.7p (5.3p). Earnings per share rose to 20.3p compared with 16.0p.

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Ann Gloag of Stagecoach, which announced record profits up 34 per cent at £43.6 million, sees a window of opportunity for more bids

## National Audit Office urges shake-up of utility regulators

By CHRISTINE BUCKLEY

THE industry regulators for electricity, gas, water and telecoms yesterday came under further pressure after the National Audit Office, the public sector watchdog, threw into question key aspects of their operations.

The audit office's concerns will be examined by MPs this year, after another parliamentary inquiry into regulators' activities. The two investigations are poised to be the biggest public examination of regulated industries.

The NAO has asked whether the whole of the regulatory structure should be overhauled to create a board of watchdogs rather than individual autonomous bodies.

The audit office asks if the regulators could be opened to greater public scrutiny to increase their accountability. It questions whether more hearings should be held in public and whether the regulators' working methods should be more transparent. It also says that the balance the regulators are striking between customers and companies' finances should be examined.

In some of the hardest hitting language used by the organisation, which is responsible for checking the accounts of government departments as well as other public sector bodies, questions have been drafted for consideration by the Public Accounts Committee.

The NAO propositions follow swiftly the announcement by the Trade and Industry Select Committee that it is to mount an inquiry into utility regulators. Debate by the Public Accounts Committee on the NAO report is scheduled for December, by which time the Trade and Industry Select

Committee will have started hearing evidence from the electricity and gas regulators. Questions from the NAO into a large range of the regulators' operations come in a comprehensive report to which all four watchdogs have submitted detailed responses.

Along with issues of accountability, MPs will discuss whether the RPI price cap formula could be improved. The RPI-X formula was devised by Stephen Littlechild, the electricity regulator, and has been a cornerstone of the regulation of all privatised industries. However, Professor Littlechild recently questioned its use in draft consultations for a new price round for the National Grid, the electricity transmission business.

The Public Accounts Committee will also question how effective regulators have been in communicating their decisions and action.

Power politics, page 29

## BA link to be judged on EU rules

By JON ASHWORTH

THE trade department has acted to bring UK competition rules in line with Brussels, before a potential monopolies inquiry into the proposed alliance between BA and American Airlines. The DTI said the move would reduce risk of discrepancies arising from two parallel investigations.

The European Commission announced last month that it would look into the proposed link-up as part of a wider study of airline alliances. The Office of Fair Trading is considering whether to refer BA-AA to the Monopolies and Mergers Commission for full investigation.

Ian Lang, President of the Board of Trade, said he was

introducing regulations to enable UK authorities to study the proposed alliance under EU competition rules. An inquiry would fall under Article 88 of the EC Treaty. Mr Lang said the move would increase the chance of reaching an early decision with maximum legal certainty.

BA welcomed the move as a "positive step", and hoped it

would lead to the process speeding up. A spokesman said: "We are quite prepared to liaise with any competent competition authority which wants to look at what we are proposing with American Airlines, because we are confident we can convince them of the substantial consumer advantages in terms of lower fares and better service."

## BUSINESS ROUNDUP

### Complex planned for Canary Wharf

PLANS for new homes, a hotel and shops complex at Canary Wharf in London's Docklands were outlined yesterday. The £300 million development of the 11-acre site is the result of a joint venture between Hotel Properties, which is listed on the Singapore Stock Exchange and which will hold a 70 per cent stake, and Canary Wharf, which will hold the rest.

Ong Beng Seng, managing director of Hotel Properties, said: "This is a unique opportunity to acquire an interest in the premier riverside development in London." Canary Wharf is owned by an international consortium led by Paul Reichmann and including Prince al-Waleed bin Talal, a nephew of King Fahd of Saudi Arabia. Mr Reichmann: "Our partnership with Hotel Properties will enable us to realise our vision of a comprehensive mixed use development, complete with all the services and amenities that make up such a locality. This is a major venture and we are confident it will also bring opportunities and employment for local people."

### Signet denies sale deal

SIGNET, the former Ratners jewellery group, yesterday denied reports that it has agreed the sale of its UK businesses to Apex Partners, the venture capital group. Signet has signalled its intention to sell the UK businesses — Ernest Jones and H Samuel — and talks with Apex Partners are understood to be at an advanced stage. A sale for about £280 million is expected, with the proceeds to be used to cut debts. Apex is also expected to buy a large stake in Goldsmiths and then perhaps merge it with Ernest Jones or H Samuel. Signet shares closed 1½p up at 24½p.

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### Southend to Hampton

SOUTHEND PROPERTIES, the troubled housing firm, is to change its name to Hampton Trust as part of moves designed to pull itself back to recovery. In the year to March 31, the group recorded losses of £9.89 million, against pre-tax profits of £2 million the year before. But after restructuring, rental income edged ahead to £19.5 million (£17.7 million). After a property portfolio revaluation, the group found it was £23 million below its original estimates at £238 million. There was no final dividend, leaving the year's total at 0.88p (2.52p). Losses ran to 9.91p per share, against earnings of 1p last time.

### Lease contracts call

ALL rights and financial obligations under lease contracts should be recognised in company accounts, says a paper published by Warren McGregor, of the Australian Accounting Research Foundation. There is a blurred difference between capital-only finance leases, which generally are accounted for, and operating leases, which are not. Joint sponsors of the paper include the International Accounting Standards Committee, the UK's Accounting Standards Board and standard-setters from America, Canada, Australia and New Zealand. The ASB invites comments.

### Boost for Stakis

STAKIS, the hotels and leisure group, yesterday reported a strong rise in room rates and occupancy levels throughout its hotels during the third quarter of this year. But the improvement failed to excite the City and shares fell 1p to close at 108p. Occupancy rates increased 3.6 percentage points to 78.6 per cent, while the average room rate rose from £44.46 to £46.85 a night. The casino division also showed an improvement with cash spent for the nine months rising nearly 4 per cent to £203 million as attendances increased 10 per cent to 1.6 million.

### Mitie advances 38%

MITIE GROUP, the provider of services to building owners and occupiers, achieved a 38 per cent increase in profits to £6.3 million in the year to the end of March. Earnings improved to 16.2p a share from 12.2p, an increase of 33 per cent. A final dividend of 2.2p a share lifts the total by 33 per cent to 4p. Turnover of £161 million was 29 per cent higher than in the previous year. David Telling, chairman, said trading in the first three months of the current year had been satisfactory.

### Golden Wonder pledge

GOLDEN WONDER has assured John Bridgeman, the Director-General of Fair Trading, that it will not maintain minimum resale prices on its goods. The Office of Fair Trading requested assurances after a complaint by a distributor of its crisps and snack foods. The complainant had entered into a contract with Golden Wonder which stipulated that payment of bonuses to dealers depended on them not re-selling goods below specified prices. This was a breach of the Resale Prices Act 1976, which outlawed resale price maintenance, said the OFT.

### Go-ahead for oilfield

GOVERNMENT consent for development of the Culew oil and gasfield in the central North Sea has been granted to Shell UK Exploration and Production, the operator. Approval was announced yesterday by Richard Page, the Energy Minister. A floating production and storage vessel will be used to develop the field, where recoverable reserves are put at 71 million barrels of oil and 244 billion cubic feet of gas. Its life is estimated at eight years. The first oil is expected to be produced in autumn next year.

### Winchester loss grows

WINCHESTER MULTIMEDIA, an entertainment company holding rights to films, television programmes and music, had a pre-tax loss of £1.9 million, or 18.7p a share, in the year to March 31, against a loss of £356,000, or 4.5p a share, in the previous year. Turnover rose twelve-fold to £3.1 million. Winchester said that the deeper loss was due to amortisation costs of *Rainbow*, its first feature film, and the write-off of its investment in ECP, publisher of *Icon* magazine. It said it has high hopes for *Rainbow*, to be released in the UK on Friday.

### Full-year profits forecast downgraded

## Euro Disney growth slows

By JON ASHWORTH

DIFFICULTIES in the French leisure market are catching up with Euro Disney, operator of Disneyland Paris, which saw operating revenues show only a modest increase in the third quarter. Revenues rose 4.5 per cent to Fr1.4 million in the three months to June 30, compared with a rise of 8.8 per cent in the previous quarter. First-quarter revenues grew by 17 per cent, boosted by lower entrance fees and the launch of Space Mountain, the rollercoaster attraction.

The shares fell 9p to 162p. Analysts blamed the strong franc and weak French con-

sumer spending, and said Euro Disney would find it heavy going this year. The three months to September 30 are traditionally the hardest in which to make money, since hotels operate near capacity, and margins are squeezed. Paribas Capital Markets yesterday downgraded its full-year forecast for Euro Disney from Fr238 million to Fr189 million. Costs are rising as the interest holiday negotiated with the banks gradually unwinds. Royalties and management fees are due to kick in again in fiscal 1999. Euro Disney remained up-

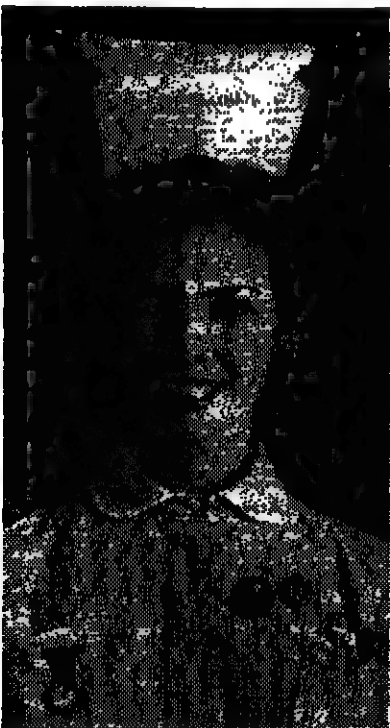
beat, saying it had made good progress in a difficult market. Hotels in Paris are suffering a slump in bookings. Occupancy at Disneyland Paris hotels rose from about 85 per cent in 1993 to 68.5 per cent in 1995. Growth in revenues and tight cost control boosted third-quarter income before exceptional items to Fr146 million compared with Fr91 million in the same period last year. Net profits slipped from Fr170 million to Fr147 million, in the absence of an exceptional gain of Fr79 million relating to the repurchase of convertible bonds.

### TOURIST RATES

	Bank	Bank
	Buy	Sell
Australia \$	2.08	1.50
Austria Sch	17.17	11.7
Belgium Fr	50.37	40.07
Canada \$	2.29	1.81
Cyprus Cyp£	0.748	0.591
Denmark Kr	8.46	6.64
Finland Mk	7.57	5.85
France Fr	6.19	7.54
Germany M	2.45	2.24
Greece Dr	36.9	2.8
Hong Kong \$	12.64	11.64
Italy Lit	1.01	0.93
Japan Yen	5.30	4.65
Liby Lira	24.6	22.4
Spain Ptas	160.50	184.50
Sweden Kr	0.594	0.539
Switzerland S	2.756	2.265
Netherlands Gld	2.38	2.18
New Zealand \$	1.48	1.25
Portugal Esc	204.00	225.00
South Africa R	7.46	6.50
Spain Ptas	25.25	183.30
Sweden Kr	10.25	10.05
Switzerland Fr	2.00	1.82
Turkey Lira	1327.00	1677.00
USA \$	1.648	1.515

Rates for small denomination banknotes only as supplied by Barclays Bank PLC. Only rates apply to travellers' cheques. Rates as at close of trading yesterday.

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□ Decision day for Bank of Scotland bidders □ Signet question is one of timing □ More building society jobs at risk

## Cold shoulder repaid with interest

PERHAPS it's the heat. Perhaps the City, or that portion of it not already on holiday, has been too fixated on the tennis, or the golf, or the Olympics. But the sale of a third of the Bank of Scotland has created precious little enthusiasm.

Or perhaps the institutions behind the biggest secondary issue in five years are having trouble whipping up enthusiasm among those shareholders who had previously been given the cold shoulder when they tried to do some basic research on their investment.

Bank of Scotland, which, with the Royal Bank of Scotland, has the retail market pretty well stitched up north of the border, has since 1985 been 32 per cent owned by Standard Life, the ultimate protective shareholder. That has bred a degree of contentment and complacency unusual even in a member of the Scottish financial mafia.

But the bank has become a victim of its own success. The value of Standard Life's stake grew sixfold, to the point where it represented almost 7 per cent of the UK portfolio. Standard Life had to get out, on any normal reading of its fiduciary duties — and to the fury of the bank. Ideally, the stake would have been sold to provide a platform to a potential bidder, and hence at a premium to the market

value. But no bidder could be found.

The insurer has had to fall back on a secondary issue, which means the shares will go to the market at a discount to their current value. This evening institutions who have bid for stock should learn what the price is and how much they will get. Such secondary issues should be easy to price, because there is already a quoted value for the shares — except that they have tended not to work out thus. The second sale of Wellcome shares in 1991 and of the two generators last year had their difficulties.

Most of the bids so far have come in between 215p and 225p, if you believe the bidders. Some of the big institutions have indicated that they will be deciding on their tenders today. Bank of Scotland shares closed at 230½p last night, and Barclays de Zoete Wedd, the people who brought you British Energy, say there is little point in their bidding lower than the high 220s.

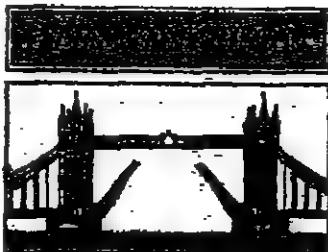
Time, and the markets, will tell. What is clear is that the price has been held back by the issue. The shares were 245p when the

sale was announced, and having fallen with the stock market's 80-point mini-collapse last week they have not shared in the subsequent recovery. Even sceptical analysts put a fair value of 250p on the shares.

Their scepticism comes because Bank of Scotland's way out of the Scottish box is locked into — the bank has a low profile 4 per cent of the market in England — has performance been into low margin areas such as corporate lending and mortgages. As a result, in the various indices the City uses to measure banks, the Bank of Scotland lags sadly behind its rivals.

### All that glitters...

THE sale of the Ernest Jones and H Samuel chains of jewelers by their owner Signet, at Rainers, is one of those stories waiting to happen this summer. Like the Bass purchase of Carlsberg Tedy that may or may not once again be imminent. The only question is the timing of the deal.



So what does one make of a report in the *Financial Times* that a purchase is agreed? It prompted an immediate denial from Signet, forced on the company by the Stock Exchange. Signet, rather like Bass as it happens, has always adopted the dignified approach that if anything is imminent the appropriate announcement will be made. Until then speculation is free, but it will remain unanswered.

The other sides to the deal, Jurek Flasecki at Goldsmiths Group, Signet's main high street rival in the jewellery trade, and Apex Partners, the venture capital group, were lying low yesterday. The deal, when it comes, will involve Apex buying the two

chains for anything up to £280 million and then merging one or both with Goldsmiths, which is too small to raise the necessary cash.

Mr Flasecki, one of that breed of entrepreneurs with few doubts about their abilities, has in the past been free with his ambitions to own Ernest Jones and H Samuel — sometimes to the embarrassment of their current owner, which has had to haul back market expectations. His reticence yesterday is probably significant. Both sides are keen on a deal, but the buyer seems the keener. A report of its imminence would serve only to put pressure on the seller.

The final disposal of the two chains, for a price that wipes out most of Signet's debt, will allow the relocation of the headquarters across the Atlantic to where the rest of the business is. The last barrier will be the fate of the preference shareholders, including a group of trouble-makers who have been making life difficult for the management. Assuming they can be squared with enough of the ordinary capital, Signet can then be an

American-quoted, American-based business. Few on the London market will mourn its departure.

### The two faces of Halifax

THERE is an element of double-talk in the Halifax's proud boast to be creating 1,000 new jobs that the unions, at least, have not been slow in picking up on. A thousand new jobs may be created, but 1,200 are definitely going, a clear case of five steps forward (possibly) and then six steps back.

The announcement, of course, is aimed at a City audience that must be reassured that the Halifax is shedding staff fast. Those potential new jobs are in areas such as direct insurance that by their very nature operate with a small workforce, and highly competitive areas too where decisions to expand can easily be reversed if the market becomes too crowded.

The actual job losses are very real, coming from the existing workforce. By the time the Hal-

ifax is a bank, it intends to be as lean as the rest of them. Except that by then the banks will probably have moved on further and cut more jobs, to which the Halifax will have to respond — with more job losses.

It is too late now, but given the new freedoms made available in the Building Societies Bill to go into insurance and so on, one must wonder whether the Halifax really needs a stock market float, and all the attendant brutality merely to please the City, to achieve its aim of being the biggest provider of personal financial services.

### Red flag... red rag

THIS latest from the bar-ricades and braziers at Mersey Docks is one of those futile, self-defeating trade union sagas that should provide a frisson of nostalgia for anyone old enough to have done their homework by candlelight during the power strikes of the 1970s. The dockers were offered cash for good behaviour, but they cut up nasty anyway. So Atlantic Container Lines, an important customer, decided to go elsewhere. Atlantic has changed its mind and come back. Mersey Docks, in a rather better negotiating position, is no longer offering the cash. All together now: "While cowards flinch and traitors sneer..."

## Warning hurts Filofax shares

BY SARAH CUNNINGHAM

ABOUT £32 million was yesterday wiped off the value of shares in Filofax, the personal organiser company, after it surprised the City with a warning that first-half profits were likely to fall.

The shares plunged 105p to 165p. The holdings of Filofax directors, who own about three million shares, were devalued by more than £3 million.

The company said that it had issued the warning because its largest UK customer, understood to be WH Smith, was reducing its stocks of Filofax products.

Robin Field, chief executive of Filofax, said that a drop in orders from the company's third-party distributor in Japan was also going to hit profits. Lower than expected growth in the US was also cited as a problem.

The company said that first-half profits would be "not less than £2 million", compared with £2.9 million in the same period last year. Second-half profits would be "at least" the same as the £3.7 million achieved last year, it said.

City followers immediately reduced their forecasts for full-year pre-tax profits for 1996-97 to £5.7 million from their earlier levels of more than £8 million. The company made a pre-tax profit of £6.6 million in the year ended March 30, 1996.

Filofax, which this time last year bought Topps of England, the maker of Microfile personal organisers, controls more than 80 per cent of the UK market.

Yesterday's profits warning came as a sharp contrast to the rosy picture painted by the company when it delivered its 1995-96 results a month ago. It then highlighted the potential for growth in Europe and other overseas markets.

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## New drugs sales soar to boost SB profits

BY ERIC REGULY

SMITHKLINE Beecham, the Anglo-American pharmaceuticals group, said it was on track to report double-digit growth this year as sales of new drugs in the second quarter more than offset the decline of older products.

The sales increase was strong enough to mask several soft spots, including falling trading profits at the clinical laboratories division, which is providing drug testing at the Atlanta Olympics, and a continued lack of earnings at Diversified Pharmaceutical Services (DPS), the US pharmaceuticals-benefit manager acquired in 1994 for \$2.3 billion.

SmithKline said sales of new products reached £370 million in the quarter, up 46 per cent. Star performer was Serenaxil-Paxil, the antidepressant. Sales grew 59 per cent to £171 million. Another strong performer was Relafen, the arthritis medicine, which saw sales rise 45 per cent to £75 million.

The biggest decline was registered by Tagamet, the ulcer drug, which is losing its patents. Its sales dropped 56 per cent to £56 million in the quarter. Jan Leschly, chief executive, said Tagamet's declines would ease from now on.

Overall sales in the quarter to

June 30 grew 17 per cent to £1.92 billion. Pre-tax profits were up 14 per cent to £342 million. Earnings per share were 8.3p against 7.4p and an interim dividend of 4p will be paid on October 15. Comparisons with the previous dividend are not relevant because the dual-share structure was recently replaced with a single class of ordinary shares.

In the half-year, pre-tax profits fell 38 per cent to £729 million on sales of £3.8 billion, up 13 per cent. The profits were down because of the gain of £512 million booked last year on the sale of the animal health business.

The profits were at the high end of analysts' forecasts and helped to push up the shares 8.5p to 696p.

Mr Leschly said that DPS is breaking even on an operating basis and will probably start contributing to earnings in the next financial year. The profit decline at clinical laboratories, meanwhile, is easing.

SmithKline, he said, plans to remain independent. A merger or takeover will not be contemplated as long as the company is experiencing strong organic growth through product launches.

Temps, page 28



Kim Tait, managing director of KS Biomedix Holdings, said trials of its rheumatoid arthritis drug were making good progress. The company, which raised £3.65 million via an AIM flotation in October, lost £218,163 in the year to May 31.

## Glaxo drug restricts Aids in trials

BY ERIC REGULY



Sykes shares up

SHARES in Glaxo Wellcome rose yesterday after a trial showed that treatments that included Eptivir, one of the company's HIV drugs, showed a marked reduction in the progression of Aids among patients.

As a result, Glaxo, which is the largest pharmaceuticals company in the world and led by Sir Richard Sykes, the deputy chairman and chief

executive, has halted an international Eptivir study in order to allow the patients on placebo to take the treatment. The study, which involved almost 1,900 patients across Europe, Canada, Australia and South Africa, began in the spring of last year and had been due to end next March.

The trial showed that 54 per cent fewer HIV patients treated with Eptivir, whose generic

name is JTC, went on to contract Aids or die, compared with patients on the placebo. The Eptivir had been administered with Retrovir, also known as AZT, an anti-HIV drug that is also made by Glaxo.

The International Aids Conference in Vancouver early this month renewed hope that the use of so-called combination treatments can re-

duce Aids virus levels. In such treatments, Eptivir and Retrovir are combined with a so-called protease inhibitor, which blocks one of the enzymes essential for the virus to replicate.

Eptivir was licensed to Glaxo in 1990 and has received regulatory approval in the US, but not in Europe.

Glaxo shares closed yesterday at 911½p, up 20½p.

## Hinchliffe acts to oust receivers from company

BY JASON NISSE

STEPHEN HINCHLIFFE, the controversial Sheffield businessman, is attempting to wrestle control of what is left of his collapsed Facia empire from KPMG, the receivers.

Mr Hinchliffe has asked Buchler Phillips, the accountant, to step in as liquidators of Facia, which collapsed eight weeks ago with debts of over £10 million, and claims he can use his powers as a director to place the company into voluntary liquidation. He said that, as KPMG has sold all the Facia businesses — which included Red or Dead, Oakland and Sock Shop, the retail chains — and can pay off the banks and other secured creditors, his work was done.

Tony Thompson, who leads the KPMG team, said it is resisting the move as he says there is more to do. High on his agenda is recovering a £2.5 million interest-free loan made by Facia to Colibri and French & Scott, companies controlled by Mr Hinchliffe.

Mr Thompson is considering legal action to recover that and other debts owed by companies controlled by Mr Hinchliffe which could run to more than £5 million.

Mr Hinchliffe has yet to provide a statement of affairs, something he was required to do under law one month ago. He has asked Baker Tilly, the accountant, to work on the report, but wants KPMG to pay for it. The two accountancy firms are currently arguing over whether KPMG should pay — and how much.

This is not the only area of dispute between KPMG and Mr Hinchliffe, who next week faces proceedings to have him disqualified as a director on an unrelated case. Allied Industrial Estates, a company owned by Mr Hinchliffe, evicted KPMG from Facia's headquarters this month, claiming £199,000 in back rent. KPMG is also investigating £1 million of payments to his companies described as finder's fees for Facia deals.

## Lotus chief fires board after clash

BY KEVIN EASON, MOTORING EDITOR

ROMANO ARTIOLI, controversial chairman of Lotus, yesterday fired his board and installed himself in the driving seat of one of Britain's most famous carmakers.

The four directors, plus Martin Brostoff, the company secretary, paid the penalty for criticising Mr Artioli for asking too much money for Lotus, which he has been promising to sell for over a year.

Estimates range as high as £70 million for a business that will make only about 1,000 cars next year but has a renowned engineering division.

The directors are believed to have been pushing Mr Artioli to drop the price to pave the way for a sale which they wanted quickly to secure the future of the business. The row culminated in a heated meeting last week in which the

directors threatened to put the business into receivership, unless Mr Artioli ended the uncertainty.

But the Italian chairman answered yesterday by having the five executives, who were not being named last night but are thought to include Neeraj Kuptur, the acting managing director, escorted from Lotus's headquarters at Hethel, near Norwich.

Lawyers went to the company and executives called in to be told they were being "removed".

Security men then walked the directors past astonished staff to the factory gates. Later, the 1,100 staff were handed a message from Mr Artioli, who bought Lotus from General Motors three years ago for £25 million, saying the directors had been removed over "a fundamental disagreement".



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## STOCK MARKET

MICHAEL CLARK

## Bank of Scotland hovers just above year's low

BANK of Scotland was a whisker above its low for the year amid growing speculation in the City that the sale of the bulk of Standard Life's 32 per cent would flop.

Shares in Bank of Scotland finished 1 1/2 p easier at 230 1/2 p compared with the year's low of 230p, but they have fallen from 312p since the start of the year. Rival brokers claim BZW is struggling with the book-building exercise for 351 million shares estimated to be worth £807 million. Standard Life has not said how many of these shares it intends to sell, but brokers say it may choose to keep about 2 per cent of the company. Standard Life now owns 30 per cent of the bank.

BZW countered last night by claiming further demand for the shares, with bids pitched in the high 220s area. The book-building should be completed by later today, with new pricing and allocations expected tomorrow. City speculators say Standard Life will be lucky if the price is pitched at 225p.



British Steel rose 4 1/2p to 172p before today's annual meeting

The rest of the equity market bounced back, helped by a positive overnight performance on Wall Street and early opening gains for the Dow Jones industrial average. The FT-SE 100 index closed near its best of the day, cheered by a positive CBI survey. It finished 271.1 higher at 3,708.4 as a total of 605 million shares change hands.

City investors have become excited by news that Glaxo Wellcome is making headway in the battle against AIDS. The shares rose 20 1/2 p to 91 1/2 p as it emerged that tests on Epiriv, its AIDS treatment, had been halted after breaching the recognised success threshold.

Tests concluded that about 54 per cent of sufferers gained some relief compared with a sample of those on a placebo. HIV sufferers who took part in the study will now receive a combination of Epiriv and Retrovir, the group's other AIDS treatment.

A strong rise in sales of pharmaceuticals helped SmithKline Beecham to raise first-half pre-tax profits by £42 million to £342 million. The shares responded with a rise of 8 1/2 p to 696p.

British Steel rose 4 1/2 p to 172p before today's annual meeting. Brokers say the group should have some encouraging words for shareholders. Railtrack responded positively to news of manage-

ment changes with a rise of 6p at 214 1/2 p, but there was little support for British Energy, unchanged at 97p, which continues to trade at a discount to the 100p partly paid offer price.

Mersey Docks stood out with a leap of 36p at 383p after a change of heart by its biggest customer, Atlantic Container Line. It is to return to the Port

Kingfisher, the Woolworth, Comet and B&Q retailer, rose 12p to 620p after a profit upgrade from BZW. Kingfisher has had a series of briefings with brokers ahead of its closed season. BZW has raised its forecast for the year by £10 million to £355 million. It has pencilled in a figure of £390 million for next year.

of Liverpool after a month's absence. ACL had switched its service to Kent.

HSBC also advanced 25 1/2 p to £10.68 as at least two brokers began pushing the shares. Goldman Sachs, the US securities house, has added HSBC to its buy list, while Merrill Lynch has upgraded its profit numbers. It has lifted its estimate for the current year from £3.9 billion to £4.26

told the annual meeting that with the housing market and economy improving the group market share had grown to somewhere in the region of 14 per cent.

His comments coincided with the first day of trading in Allied Carpets, a rival. The shares were piling on the premium in early trading as institutions attempted to increase their weighting after

being scaled down during the initial placing. Priced at 215p, the shares opened at 228p and climbed to a peak of 234p where they closed with a premium of 19p as more than nine million shares were traded.

Also making its public debut was Selector, the Israeli company specialising in drinks dispensing equipment. The shares, placed at 66p on the Alternative Investment Market, opened at 70p and traded quietly for the rest of the session, maintaining a premium of 4p.

But Therapeutic Antibodies failed to achieve a premium in first-time dealings after a placing at 500p. The price opened at 498p and slipped to a low for the day of 496p, before rallying to close at 509p, a discount of 10p.

The decision not to launch a counter-bid for Docks de France, the French retailer, enabled Tesco, the supermarket group, to repair some of the recent damage to its price with an increase of 8p to 286p.

BSkyB, the satellite broadcaster in which News International, a owner of The Times, has a 40 per cent stake, advanced 14p to 294p excited by the news that Bertelsmann and Kirch, the German media groups, were in talks. Earlier this month, BSkyB and Kirch agreed to provide a digital television system for the German market.

GILT-EDGED: News that the latest auction had been heavily oversubscribed provided only temporary support to the rest of the bond market. The £2 billion of Treasury 8 per cent with a dual maturity date 2000/03 was covered 4.81 times. It enabled prices in the rest of the market to pick up after a slow start, but a bullish survey from the CBI saw those gains quickly curtailed.

In the futures pit, the September series of the long gilt finished 1/8 p easier at £106 1/8 as the number of contracts completed doubled to 31,000. In 2015, Treasury 8 per cent 2015 finished five ticks lower at 89 1/2 p, while at the shorter end, Treasury 8 per cent 2000 eased 1/8 p to £103.

NEW YORK: Buy programs and earnings-driven strength in American equity and Allied-Signal kept the Dow Jones industrial average higher in early trading. At midday, the index was up 30.33 points to 5,421.27.

Closing Prices Page 30

COMMODITIES

LONDON COMMODITY EXCHANGE

ICE-ICE (LONDON 0.0000)

CRUDE OILS (\$/barrel FOB)

BRITISH PETROLEUM

BRITISH PETROLEUM

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BSkyB, the satellite broadcaster in which News International, a owner of The Times, has a 40 per cent stake, advanced 14p to 294p excited by the news that Bertelsmann and Kirch, the German media groups, were in talks. Earlier this month, BSkyB and Kirch agreed to provide a digital television system for the German market.

GILT-EDGED: News that the latest auction had been heavily oversubscribed provided only temporary support to the rest of the bond market. The £2 billion of Treasury 8 per cent with a dual maturity date 2000/03 was covered 4.81 times. It enabled prices in the rest of the market to pick up after a slow start, but a bullish survey from the CBI saw those gains quickly curtailed.

In the futures pit, the September series of the long gilt finished 1/8 p easier at £106 1/8 as the number of contracts completed doubled to 31,000. In 2015, Treasury 8 per cent 2015 finished five ticks lower at 89 1/2 p, while at the shorter end, Treasury 8 per cent 2000 eased 1/8 p to £103.

NEW YORK: Buy programs and earnings-driven strength in American equity and Allied-Signal kept the Dow Jones industrial average higher in early trading. At midday, the index was up 30.33 points to 5,421.27.

Closing Prices Page 30

COMMODITIES

LONDON COMMODITY EXCHANGE

ICE-ICE (LONDON 0.0000)

CRUDE OILS (\$/barrel FOB)

BRITISH PETROLEUM

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## MAJOR INDICES

New York (midday):  
Dow Jones 5,421.27 (+30.33)  
S&P Composite 635.25 (+1.78)

Tokyo:  
Nikkei Average 21,663.99 (+158.09)

Hong Kong:  
Hang Seng 10,865.31 (+67.02)

Amsterdam:  
EEX Index 525.41 (+0.21)

Sydney:  
All Ordinaries 2,136.00 (+16.4)

Frankfurt:  
DAX 2,475.00 (+7.33)

Singapore:  
Straits 2,169.47 (+4.59)

Brussels:  
General 924.00 (+7.33)

Paris:  
CAC 40 1,982.23 (+21.98)

Zurich:  
SIX 755.50 (+7.07)

London:  
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## TEMPUS

The next stage

HAVING grabbed 71 per cent of the UK bus market, the buccannering bosses of Stagecoach are feeling a bit lukewarm about a market that is maturing. Owners of bus companies want high prices for their local franchise, which rather defeats the acquisition-driven strategy of Stagecoach. Also on the horizon is a big question mark from the Labour Party. It promises more regulation to end the chaos of "bus wars" on the high streets but, typically, the bosses of new Labour are vague on the details.

Stagecoach should not be overly concerned about buses but should be worried about the chaos of "bus wars" on the high streets but, typically, the bosses of new Labour are vague on the details.

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THE TIMES  
CITY DIARY

Hopkins the whistleblower

IAN HOPKINS, former head of group treasury and risk at Barings, yesterday gave MPs a fascinating insight into the final days of the merchant bank. Hopkins, who was giving evidence to the Treasury Select Committee, is regarded in some quarters as a "whistleblower" for trying to raise concerns over Barings's lack of risk controls. He was fired from the senior management committee on which Peter Norris, the former chief executive officer sat. What MPs wanted to know was why. "I was told I had got right up Peter Norris's nose," he replied.

Numbers game

FULL marks to the Halifax for its carefully worded announcement yesterday, not to mention its mathematics. The first paragraph, from the building society that is planning a £10 billion flotation, highlighted its "potential to create 1,000 jobs over the next 18 months". Further down, the Halifax came clean: "Over the same period approximately 1,200 jobs will be phased out as more efficient procedures are introduced. The net position is that by the end of 1997 there will be about 200 fewer jobs in the head office locations."



"Now we can afford a new carpet"

Dripping wet

UNITED UTILITIES, the water and power group facing a shareholder revolt over executive pay, is putting up a brave defence after forking out a fortune to lease one of the capital's most expensive buildings as its London headquarters. The company that signed a lease for the 9,000 sq ft building in Mayfair says it will require two out of five floors to be kept free for business meetings. United Utilities explained the reasoning behind the group's move from Old Queen Street: "Our present London office runs on Thames Water, and the pressure is so fast, that people regularly come out the door looking soaked."

Siren voices

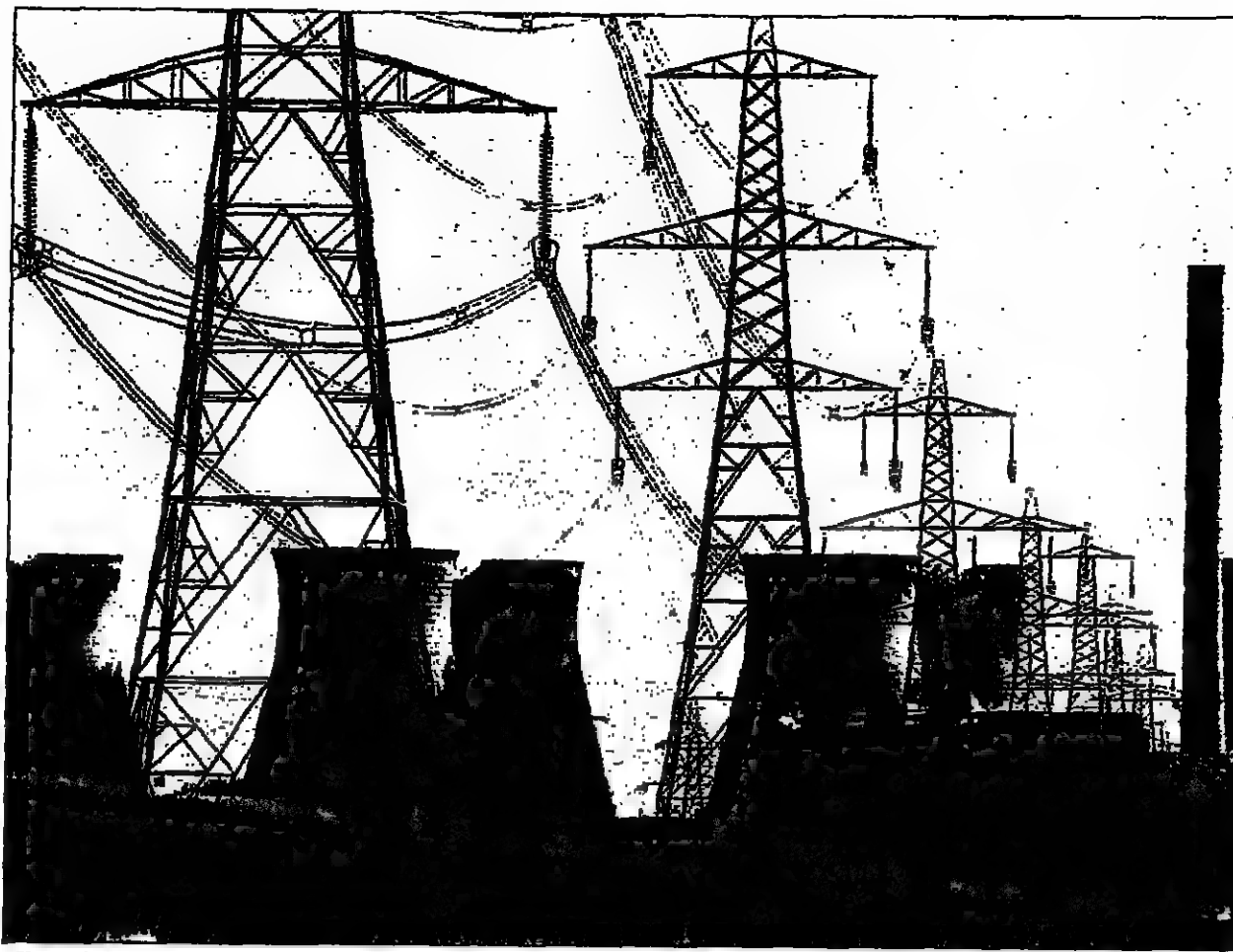
WOMEN, sex, and power is the head-turning story tackled in *Fortune* magazine. The US business bi-monthly focuses on seven sirens from the US who have rocketed through the glass ceilings, sending temperatures soaring. According to *Fortune*: "They embrace — even flaunt — their femininity and sexuality to get where they want to be." Step forward Charlotte Beers, 61, chief executive officer at Ogilvy & Mather Worldwide, who calls CEOs "honey" and "dartin". She has even been known to refer to Lou Gerstner, CEO at IBM, as "that adorable little man". Dede Brooks, CEO at Sotheby's, and Linda Marcelli, Merrill Lynch's district director in New York, are also on the list.

AS SHOPPERS dive towards the freezer section at Safeways around the country, tripping one another up in their pursuit of a cold lolly, a basket of bargain goodies is being sadly neglected. In the spirit of the summer sales, Holt's anti-freeze and deicer is on offer at enticing discount prices.

MORAG PRESTON

# Parties see fine-tuning as next step in power politics

Christine Buckley on energy, now high up as a poll issue



Transformation of the energy industry has forced politicians to rethink their policies for the next general election

Greg Knight, the new Energy Minister, yesterday moved from the Deputy Chief Whip's office into one of the most crucial political roles in the run-up to a general election. When the Liberal Democrats became the first political party to bring out a pre-election energy policy, with a carbon tax as its cornerstone, they began one of the key campaign debates.

The Lib Dems took the first round, with energy politics likely to be important in the fight for votes. The public eye has been well locked on to utilities through disputes over executive pay. And as the programme to introduce competition to household power progresses, energy will stay near the top of the political agenda. Its ticket is a loaded one, spanning consumer issues, regulatory control, the environment and competition.

Labour's plans for a £3 billion windfall tax have raised the stakes in the public backlash against power and water companies. Later this year, the political parties' post-conference campaigning will coincide with a review by the Commons Trade and Industry Select Committee of the gas and electricity regulators, focusing attention further.

Details of what we shall see from the main parties is unclear, as yet, but some framework is emerging. Dieter Helm, an energy economist, commented recently that the similarities between Labour and the Conservatives are greater than the differences. He accused the two main parties of short-termist strategies unlikely to provide a solid basis for energy utilities. In an editorial in *Energy Utilities*, he said: "Just as Europe seems to be getting its energy and competition policies sorted out, Britain's politicians seem content with an old-fashioned round of utility bashing."

Energy has changed almost beyond recognition under the Conservative Government, as a result of privatisation. Ahead of the next election, the Conservatives are likely to make much of falling domestic bills and the embryonic structure that will soon allow the nation to shop around for power.

They will, of course, be attacked for the companies' huge profits and for the big pay-backs to shareholders, most notably National Power's £1.1 billion special dividend. The clearest sign yet of what the Conservatives may do with their energy policy came recently in a speech to the Royal Institute of International Affairs.

Energy has changed almost beyond recognition under the Conservative Government, as a result of privatisation. Ahead of the next election, the Conservatives are likely to make much of falling domestic bills and the embryonic structure that will soon allow the nation to shop around for power.

After years of laughing at the scare stories, British industry has started to take the "Year 2000 Problem" much more seriously. It has become clear that almost every type of enterprise, from coffee machine makers to the Defence Ministry, has software that cannot calculate past 1999.

The problem is simple. Software systems that store dates in dd/mm/yy format are unable to differentiate between 2001 and 1901, identifying both as '01'. For display purposes, this poses no problem: if a computer dates a letter 2/2/01, its reader will get the message. But in business, computers subtract one date from another and will throw up an error if told that an insurance policy starts in 97 and ends in 01. As the millennium approaches, this faulty arithmetic is plunging systems into a digital abyss.

On the whole, business had hitherto supposed that such a simple problem must have a simple solution. Seen as more of a headache than a time-

bomb, the task was postponed. Rob Wirszky, director-general of the Computing Services and Software Association, says that procrastination has taken computer systems to the brink of collapse.

He adds: "It has been put off for decades, and as a result, we're looking at the biggest threat to business continuity since terrorism. Correcting a line of data may be easy, but the sheer scale and complexity of the network makes correction a logistical nightmare."

Updating a system is done in three stages. First, an impact analysis works out which records need changing, and whether it is worth replacing the system altogether. Then, the operation is

planned, which takes between three to five months. Lastly, the records are updated — a matter of adding two digits — and the whole system has to work in harmony. One line of overlooked data can send the system crashing again.

The costs of correction vary. Royal Bank of Scotland paid £300,000 for the impact analysis alone. Data costs £150 per line to amend, but given that most systems contain hundreds of thousands of lines, the cost to large institutions can run into millions. One report estimated the worldwide costs of correction at £600 billion.

Businesses are trying to find ways out. Coopers & Lybrand, the accountant, says some companies are selling loan port-

folios whose assets are less than the cost of correcting the system it is stored on. Others are thinking of mounting a legal challenge to software suppliers, saying that systems bought in the mid-Eighties should be expected to have a shelf life beyond 15 years.

In the meantime, the stampede to IT consultants has begun. The problem now, says Ross Jobber, an IT analyst at UBS, lies in finding enough programmers to meet demand. He says: "The old programs are written in a language called Cobol, which few of today's programmers have learnt. It is only used for fixing old systems, whereas most programmers want to be on the cutting edge. Also, they can earn five or

six times more learning languages like C++, and get much more interesting jobs."

A solution to this manpower shortage is emerging. While UK programmers are selective about which languages they pick up, those in India, the Philippines and Malaysia are far less choosy.

Andersen Consulting, a leading Year 2000 specialist, is setting up a "solution centre" of 1,000 programmers in the Philippines, dedicated to solving the problem for clients around the world. Distance is no object. Andersen will deliver clients' software to the base, and after a few months of round-the-clock troubleshooting, the millennium-friendly version can be returned. Alternatively, the programmers can tap into the clients' software using modems. So the team could repair the software of a bank in Nottingham.

Changes like these will remain in place for years after the problem has been solved. Analysts say that the problem has acted as a catalyst to speed up outsourcing: consultancies brought in to update the systems will know their clients' software inside out, putting them in pole position for further work.

Consultancies play down the impact on profits, saying companies that embark on the Year 2000 solution will be shelving other IT developments. But when the time comes to start again, IT consultancies will be starting the new millennium on a strong footing.

Tim Eggar, left, John Battle and Matthew Taylor have put their parties' points

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▲ USAT; # Price at suspension; Ex dividend; Ex stock  
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## ■ FILM

Genius or dictator? Jan De Bont defends his methods on the set of *Twister*



## ■ POP 1

Veteran Irish folk singer Norma Waterson is the surprise inclusion in the Mercury shortlist

THE TIMES  
ARTS

## ■ POP 2

Rage undimmed: Neil Young, the "godfather of grunge", plays a stormer of a set in Dublin



## ■ MUSIC

The late, great Tony Hancock inspires Dominic Muldowney's fine new concerto for trombone

CINEMA: Jan De Bont, hit director of *Speed* and the imminent *Twister*, talks to Sheila Johnston

# White tornado cleaning up

As a young man at the Amsterdam Film Academy in the early Sixties, Jan De Bont and his fellow students would make a regular pilgrimage to Paris to sit at the feet of the nouvelle vague guru Jean-Luc Godard. "We met him many, many times; we were big fans of his," De Bont says.

Time passed and De Bont, now one of his country's most distinguished cinematographers, made the inevitable move to Hollywood in 1981, where he shot *Jewel of the Nile* and some of the *Die Hard* and *Lethal Weapon* pictures, as well as lighting Sharon Stone's intimate cavities in *Basic Instinct* for his compatriot Paul Verhoeven.

His first film as director, *Speed*, was one of the summer hits of 1994, and established Keanu Reeves and Sandra Bullock as major stars. But none of them could exactly be called Godardian.

"The studios are not as monolithic as you think," says De Bont, who has retained a thick Lowland accent and an attachment to his home town: he is back in Amsterdam to conduct interviews and auditions for the main role, recently vacated by Keanu Reeves, in the sequel to *Speed* (which, he says, he is only directing because of a contractual obligation). "They give you plenty of freedom."

Freedom, that is, for those who keep the tills ringing. And, even though *Speed* ended up earning more than \$330 million worldwide, it still took De Bont a good two years to mount his next picture.

Columbia balked at the \$120 million price tag on a project to remake the Godzilla monster movies, and it was eventually aborted in favour of *Twister*, an action thriller about a group of daredevil storm-chasers tracking a series of violent tornadoes. This has proved one of the early summer hits in America, scoring especially well in the mid-West, the heart of twister country. It should go down a storm in Britain, too. We might not have much in the way of tornadoes, but we do have a national obsession with the weather.

*Twister* is just one of a series

of disaster movies on the horizon: close on its heels comes *Independence Day*, in which another hazard from the skies, in the shape of hostile aliens, lays waste to America. There are no fewer than four forthcoming volcano movies, all of which have landed in De Bont's in-tray (none impressed him). Also coming up is James Cameron's *Titanic*. And De Bont has just made a down-payment on a disaster script set in outer space called *Galileo's Wake*.

There is one large difference between these new catastrophes and classic American-in-peril movies of the 1970s

Overpaid superheroes are going out of style

such as *Earthquake* and *The Towering Inferno*. Then every hero — and every victim — was played by a major celebrity. But both *Twister* and *Independence Day* field second-division stars. In the latter the world is saved by such minor luminaries as Jeff Goldblum, Bill Pullman and Will Smith. The former has Bill Paxton, an actor with a long string of supporting parts to his credit, and Helen Hunt, an actress known in America for her girl-next-door looks and the lead role in a television comedy series.

Part of the thinking behind this is pure economics: "Just the computer effects on *Twister* cost more than \$20 million (of a total budget of at least \$70 million), and they're only a small part of the movie," De Bont says. "People think technology gets cheaper, but it doesn't. The equipment does, but the talent gets a lot more expensive, because you have to have artists, painters, digital animators..." Certainly, the digital effects are one of *Twister*'s main attractions.

But there is another pressing reason for the low-star wattage. All those overpaid superheroes of the 1980s —

Arnold Schwarzenegger, Sylvester Stallone, Bruce Willis — are going out of style. "Irwin Allen [the producer behind classic disaster films such as *The Poseidon Adventure*] was very dependent on stars. And I've worked with a lot of them in my life, but they're hard for the audience to relate to. Also," De Bont adds, more revealingly, "if you want them to do certain things, you have to argue with them all the time."

This brings us to the numerous rumours emanating from the *Twister* production, which suggest that the urbane, silver-haired director might just be a raving autocratic Hyde on location, prepared to sacrifice anything and anyone to his vision. His habit of punching his actors into the very eye of the madstorm caused Hunt to suffer repeated knocks, one of which reportedly left her with concussion. On another occasion, a scene was so brightly lit that she and Paxton were temporarily blinded, forcing them to wear protective glasses for several days.

Furthermore, arguments with the crew reportedly culminated in De Bont's pushing a camera assistant into the mud and a mass sympathy walkout led by his director of photography, Don Burgess. (Burgess's replacement, Jack Green, was also injured when a set collapsed on him towards the end of the shoot, requiring De Bont to take over the camera for the final few days.)

"You never want to put an actor in any danger," De Bont counters. "On all the movies I've ever worked on, nobody got hurt. Sure, they got bruised sometimes, but I would never let an actor do anything I wouldn't do." This is not altogether reassuring, coming from a man who was scalped by a lion in 1981 while shooting a film called *Roar*.

He is well aware that an A-list star, confronted with similar rigours, would instantly retire to his luxury Winnebago to call up his lawyer, agent and therapist. "When they started out they did it all, their early movies were always their best. Especially with Schwarzenegger, that was the great stuff, that was when he



Hollywood's darling Jan De Bont counts his box-office receipts in the hundreds of millions

threw himself into a part. There has been a tendency over the past ten years or so to treat actors like pussycats. They're so sensitive, you have to be very careful. I was getting a little fed up with that. We are all sensitive!"

De Bont's morning had been spent seeking out more untalented talent for *Speed 2*, including the singer-turned-actor Jon Bon Jovi.

It is unlikely, however, that Reeves, a famously kamikaze actor who insisted on doing several of the stunts on *Speed* (and only weeks ago was in hospital after yet another motorcycle crash) left the se-

quel out of cold feet. "He's going through a difficult time in his life right now," says the outspoken director. "He doesn't want to grow up, he wants to stay young. He doesn't enjoy the success of *Speed*, and doesn't want to be an action hero. When he came to the opening of *Twister*, there were lots of photographers swarming around him and he was totally freaked out."

A Dutch actress called Maevie had given me an unauthorised preview of the script, which finds Jack Traven (the hero of the first *Speed*) in a tuxedo and embroiled in a discussion with

the Sandra Bullock character about their relationship. But it will not be the same person played by Reeves.

"He's still called Jack in the script, because I'm not going to change the name until we cast the part," says De Bont, explaining that he likes to give each of his main actors his own customised name. "I did the same thing on *Twister*: I couldn't come up with a better name for Bill Paxton than... Bill. It makes the actors feel more comfortable, too. And it may even make up for some of the hard knocks."

Twister is released in Britain on Friday

# Affectionate portrait of a tragic clown

PROMS: Success for a concerto inspired by Tony Hancock's life

FOR years Dominic Muldowney has been composing intelligent, quirky music in the decent semi-obscure usually reserved for seriously modern composers. But with his new Trombone Concerto, commissioned by the BBC and premiered at the Proms on Monday, he may have hit the jackpot.

Not that the piece is exactly bursting with humbling tunes. It is a jagged, mocking and, towards the end, sad work. But that is the point. It is inspired by the comedian Tony Hancock — whose talent and career still evoke strong emotions, 28 years after his suicide in an Australian hotel.

Hancock, Muldowney borrows two things: the mournful-clown personality; and the first six notes of the Hancock's *Half-Hour* theme tune, which nearly everyone over 40 can (approximately) whistle. The first gives the work its unsettling and nihilistic mood. The second provides part of the musical material; there are also nods at Schoenberg and the well-worn motif B-A-C-H. But Muldowney twists the perky *Half-Hour* triplet and the fateful "wrong note" through all manner of mind-boggling inversions.

At first the soloist, the virtuoso Swedish trombonist Christian Lindberg, leads the orchestra in a merry burlesque: a comic genius dispatching gags at full pelt, if you like. He sings as well as plays, he produces weird chords, he sends melodies soaring, Tommy Dorsey-style, in a corny vibrato.

But with the slow movement, doubts creep in. The trombone tries to be Hamlet, but is mocked by a trio of scornful flutes. He turns indignantly to silence them, and is mocked again. Eventually other members of the orchestra stand up, as if in sympathy with the pathetic protagonist.

That sets up the last movement: fast and jolly at

BBC PO/Tortelier  
Albert Hall/Radio 3

first, but gradually disintegrating into the bathos of "offstage" crashes, until the soloist is left to play one last grunt in a spotlight that is then quickly extinguished. Too late we realise that this comic genius has been not joking, but drowning.

Lindberg perfectly caught that mixture of gloomy penitence and doomed ambi-



Dominic Muldowney: quotes radio theme tune

tion that Hancock invested in his most famous sketches. As he played the slow movement, trying to maintain some dignity against all odds, this listener at least was reminded of Hancock as the would-be heroic juror in his great skit on *Twelve Angry Men*: "Does Magna Carta mean nothing to you? Did she die in vain?"

Under Yan Pascal

Tortelier's direction the excellent BBC Philharmonic (which had earlier frisked convincingly through the Albert Roussel's energetic ballet, *Bacchus et Ariadne*) played a lively Sid James to Lindberg's Hancock. I just hope that the success of this bizarre but affecting concert doesn't give anybody the idea of writing a Harry Worth Symphony.

RICHARD MORRISON

This review appeared in later editions yesterday

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# Lining up against the wonderwall

David Sinclair, a Mercury Music Prize judge, discusses the shortlist announced yesterday (and explains why the Beatles missed out)

ENDING weeks of speculation and nearly two months of detailed deliberation, the Mercury Music Prize shortlist for 1996 was announced at a press conference in London yesterday. This has been my third tour of duty as one of the ten judges of the competition, the music industry's equivalent of the Booker Prize, and, as before, it was a massive labour of love to whittle down the 150 entries of albums by British and Irish acts to a list of just ten titles. As always, too, there were some surprises and regrets along the way.

But when we met for a day of exhaustive discussion last week, I am sure none of the judges were surprised by our eventual decision to include Oasis's landmark album, *What's the Story Morning Glory?* in the list (and those that regretted it concealed it pretty well). Despite the lukewarm reviews it received when it came out, this album has proved to be a watershed in British pop, and still sounds fresh and exciting after nine months of saturation exposure, the like of which has not been witnessed since the heyday of the Beatles.

However, in the battle of the Britpop bands it is now Paul

rather than last year's challengers, Blur, who have emerged as Oasis's main rival. Pulp's album, *Different Class*, was judged to be one of the most evocative and accomplished albums of the year, as much for its extraordinary insights into the English psyche as for its remarkable spread of original pop tunes.

It is not always as easy to pin down exactly what Black Grape are on about, but the vigour and ebullience of their music carried the day for *It's Great When You're Straight... Yeah*, while Manic Street Preachers won admiration for the unexpected maturity and sheer songwriting craft displayed on their album *Everything Must Go*.

A world away from the headline-grabbing Britpop bands is the heartwarming music of veteran folk chanteuse Norma Waterson. The effortless beauty of her adaptations of songs by the Grateful

Dead, Elvis Costello, Billy Bragg and others on her self-titled debut was a revelation. So too was the stirring orchestral narrative of *The Beltrane Fire* by Peter Maxwell Davies, an entry confidently steered on to the list by those judges with ears more keenly attuned to excellence in classical music than mine.

Courtney Pine's *Modern Day Jazz Stories*, an incendiary combination of virtuoso hard hop and hip hop, muscled its way on to the list by sheer force of musical will. Soul singer Mark Morrison likewise displayed an unsullied armoury of musical tricks on his debut *Return of the Mack*, while Underworld's *Second Toughest in the Infants* shone through in a year that produced a comparatively lacklustre batch of entries from the dance end of the market.

There will be much debate about the inclusion of Help,



Norma Waterson: nominated for her folk album of pop songs

the charity album recorded in a single day by a multiplicity of British and Irish acts. Was it chosen strictly on musical merit or was this the first album in the history of the

prize to be justified by extenuating circumstances? Since none of the judges could agree on which were the outstanding tracks (apart from Radiohead's transcendental *Lucky*),

and which songs made up the ballast, it seems that this is, in fact, the rarest of pop beasts: a multi-artist compilation album with something for everyone.

For the second time, Richard Thompson ended up in (unofficial) 11th place, on this occasion for his album *you? me? us?* Quite what this prodigiously talented man must do to get into the final ten remains one of the eternal mysteries of the prize. The clarinet player and saxophonist John Surman also missed the final ten by a whisker with his mysterious ECM album *A Biography of the Rev Absalom Dowe*.

And, curiously, given the avowed intent of the prize to "celebrate all types of music currently being produced in this country" there was much anguished debate among the judges on the panel about the Beatles' *Anthology II*. Considering that the album's flagship track is *Real Love*, it seemed to me that, irrespective of timeliness, this one clearly fell short on the "musical merit" argument alone.

The winner of the Mercury Music Prize will be announced at a televised presentation dinner on September 10

# Enter the old rock dragon

Neil Young  
The Point, Dublin

formed with their frontman was readily apparent.

They opened in a blaze of frenzied power-chord glory with *Hey Hey, My My*, not only a manifesto of rock and roll's first principles but also its very embodiment. Ironically, the Sex Pistols — who are portrayed as talismanic Zeitgeist-shapers in the song — were forced to cancel their scheduled reunion gig at this same venue last week because interest in ticket sales allegedly faded away. The

song's combustion-before-decay sentiments are, it seems, more applicable these days to Kurt Cobain.

And yet the following two hours proved that no one burns as bright as Neil Young himself. When everyone else's spark has been all but extinguished, he is still on fire, raging

against the dying of the light with a passion and commitment so intense as to leave the near-capacity audience awe-struck, feeling as though they had been transported to some kind of musical never-never land.

While most of the set drew on his fabled back catalogue, with the likes of *Pachanga*, *Cortez*, *The Killer* and *Danger Bird*, being dusted down and given the star treatment, Young also found room for a few tracks from his slightly below-par new album, *Bro-*

ken Arrow, with the cascading guitar-fest of *Slip Away* complemented by the heartstring-tugging ballad *Music Arcade*.

Although the solo acoustic interlude of *The Needle and the Damage Done*, *Long May You Run* and *Sugar Mountain* got the devoted crowd singing along, the highlight had to be the 13-minute full-blooded sonic assault of *Like a Hurricane*, in which a manic, almost demonic Young did things with his guitar that only Jimi Hendrix could possibly have grasped.

NICK KELLY





# OPERA

Why we don't see more of Covent Garden's productions broadcast on television



# POP

Limp, inept and strangely unprovocative, *Voyeurz* is barely credible as entertainment

# THE TIMES ARTS



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# TOMORROW

Washington goes to the theatre: read Benedict Nightingale's verdict on the RSC's new play

Broadcasting more opera on TV will not put an end to charges of elitism, says Rodney Milnes



Angela Gheorghiu as Violetta in Richard Eyre's 1994 production of Verdi's *La traviata*, one of the few Covent Garden stagings of recent years to have been televised

## Obstructed views from the box seat

So it's "accessibility" time once more in the great and ever-continuing debate about public subsidy to opera. That subsidy can be made to appear massive by those who want to dress it up as such, but is puny in European terms, and it is unfortunate that the debate should be continuing at a time when "European" is almost as dirty a word as "opera". The result — at Covent Garden at least — is seat prices few can afford, and up goes the very reasonable cry of taxpayers' money being used to subsidise the pleasures of the rich.

Suddenly comes the magic wand of "opera on television": transmit performances nationally on the small screen and everything will be all right. The Royal Opera House was encouraged to stress this politically correct principle in its application to the Arts Council Lottery Board (the chairman at the time was Peter Gummer, who is now chairman of the ROH).

Well, yes and no. It would be nice if there was as much opera on television here as there is in — ugh! — "Europe": there is less now than there was, and it is no coincidence that the two zealously proselytising TV executives who led us so much — Jeremy Isaacs and Dennis Marks — are now running London's opera houses. Those opera houses naturally want to show their wares to the widest possible audience: there are people at BBC2 and Channel 4 who want to televise opera, and do — the Channel 4-Glyndebourne tie-up is of great benefit to everyone.

But opera is as expensive to televise

as it has always been to stage: it is a fearsomely labour-intensive activity. Budgets at the BBC in particular have been shrinking as fast as those of the performing companies: the chief casualty recently was *The Second Mrs Kong*, Birnstiel's and Glyndebourne's big success, which had to be pulled from the schedules at a late stage for budgetary reasons.

There is a creepy authoritarian tinge to some of the calls for mass-television, as though it were as good for you as cod-liver oil. Compared to (sorry) Europe, opera is still a minority interest in the UK, and there's no reason for those of us who like it to force it down the throats of the public to the extent sometimes suggested. And there is an element of healthy union-bashing, as though only restrictive practices were preventing hours and hours of opera on the small screen. The idea recently proposed that performances should be televised with no extra fees to those performing or enabling the performance is distasteful — back, as in Mozart's day, to the musician as servant. All right, the extra million or lack of it isn't going to make much

difference to Pavarotti, but a few extra quid will to a young singer, player or scene-shifter.

There are two sorts of television relay. A TV channel broadcasts a performance, a one-off. The cost can be up to £500,000, which is a lot of money, even to TV companies. Or there is the co-production, a three-way operation between opera, TV and video companies, which splits the costs: the video company ends up with the product, the TV company with first broadcast rights, the opera company with kudos and "accessibility" brownie points.

This accounts for some perceived imbalance: the Phillips-Kirov project means we have seen a lot of opera from St Petersburg on BBC2. We have not seen the Covent Garden Ring, for the simple reason that there are already three complete Rings available commercially, and a good co-producer is hard to find. The recent ROH *Don Carlos* was a candidate ripe for transmission: but, sorry, television rights rested with the originating French company. Performances in anything other than the original language are hard to "sell" to

video companies, but the joint ENO-RM Arts-BBC2 *Ariadante* has slipped through the net (Handel is rather big commercially this year). If you are into commercial co-production, problems proliferate, especially at a time when video companies are pulling in their horns: the market is buoyant in Japan, to some extent in America, less so on the Continent, much less so here.

Some pointers to the future. There is no union-led conspiracy to keep opera off our screens. Management prefers to negotiate conditions for broadcasting out of the public eye: lips are buttoned, but owners are distinctly promising (the words "on the point of breakthrough" have been heard). The ROH and the BBC, in particular, are keenly aware of their status as national public institutions with a duty to serve that public. Special arrangements are in hand to facilitate the non-commercial transmission of British works from British houses: even international singers' agents are co-operating, and there is goodwill all round. There is also speculative (as yet) talk of new methods of funding towards this end.

Is opera on the box a substitute? Obviously yes, to those who are prevented geographically or financially from attending performances. It is an invaluable learning aid, where titles come into their own. Some productions work better on TV than in the theatre — both the Chéreau and Kupfer *Rings* are examples — and the art of the video-TV director is a sadly under-appreciated one. It was depressing to read a review of several video releases in the national press last week in which not a single director was mentioned, as though performances get themselves on to the box by magic. And the technology gets better and better, with new high-definition tape and format, and digital sound.

All this is to ignore opera performances conceived for the medium of TV, even composed for it — Channel 4's efforts in the latter direction have not been too promising, but the art, pace Britten and Owen Wingrave, is still in its infancy. It is also to ignore the fact that all this politically correct chatter about accessibility of opera via television is a figleaf to cover the shameful problem of seat prices and resulting charges of elitism.

If, as Richard Morrison has demanded in these pages, the top seat price at Covent Garden were £50, as in Europe (sorry again), there would be no problem: everyone could go to the opera, there'd be plenty of it on television, and all would be well with the world. But if, as Gummer has suggested, stall seats are to cost £250 in the redevelped house, the problem will return in spades, redoubled, to haunt him.

## Cool moves, drum fever

On his last visit to London in 1992, Henry Threadgill, the composer/saxophonist, led a band, Very Very Circus, comprising two tubas, two guitars and French horn. His latest quintet, *Make a Move* — heard at the Queen Elizabeth Hall this week — features Brandon Ross, guitarist, Tony Cedras, accordionist/harmonium player, Karl Peters, electric bassist, and drummer Gerald Cleaver. Again, it's not the most conventional of jazz line-ups. But then Threadgill is on record as asserting: "Jazz is part of my vocabulary, but I don't do jazz specifically. I consider myself an international musician."

Having grown up in the Chicago of Mural Richard Abrams's Association for the Advancement of Creative Music, and having allied himself early on with such musical innovators as Anthony Braxton and Joseph Jarman, Threadgill has always been a restless, questing individual, his music resisting all attempts to categorise it. One feature, however, is immediately apparent: his band, unlike many "jazz" players, spend almost all their time earnestly reading Threadgill's music, negotiating their way through it with a scrupulous care more frequently associated with "classical" musicians. Not that such categories mean anything to Threadgill: "All these divisions! It's a great piece of music, it's a great piece of music."

The music thus embraces everything from multi-textured, impressionistic flute and harmonium dirges to searingly affecting pieces in which Threadgill's alto wails and soars over a wall of fearfully energetic electronic sound underpinned by Cleaver's tumbling drums. The overall impression is of tremendous power, but without any of the swaggering virtuosity that generally accompanies it: his pieces do conform roughly to jazz's conventional head-solos-head pattern, but are sufficiently unpredictable and subtle to allow soloists few spaces for improvisation.

Such a *modus operandi* is intentional. Threadgill states: "You can't let musicians get too relaxed — you do something you know too well, you're not going to get excited. You'll do what you know." This approach undoubtedly

renders his music admirably, uncompromisingly original, and produces, as on this occasion, concerts of extraordinary energy and complexity — the downside is that, instead of being unequivocally uplifted, it's all too easy to leave feeling you have been given a large dose of something Threadgill has decided will do you good.

For the past week, the South Bank has reverberated to *Rhythm Sticks 1996*, an eight-day celebration of percussion-based music embracing everything from gamelan to talko, flamenco to drum 'n' bass, samba to jazz and African music. Closing the festival (also Q&A) was *Power and the Beat*, featuring master drummers from Iran, the Pouria Vali Zorkhaneh Club performing exercises rooted in military training, and a trio singing to the accompaniment of drumming and a shimmering stringed instrument, the tar.

Culture shock is a performer's chief hurdle in events like these, at least as far as the uninitiated is concerned, but the concert's opening attraction, a percussion trio chiefly utilising the tombak (a wooden "goblet" drum) and the daf (a frame drum), were immediately accessible to anyone with a pulse and a sense of rhythm. After pondering their hands and warming their drumsticks to precisely the right tautness by exposing them to a single-bar electric fire, the trio launched into an hour of supple percussion.

A straightforward rhythm having been established on finger-cymbals, the drummers first consolidated it, then, just as jazz improvisers would have done, tossed the lead from player to player in an exuberant but delicate and precise display of unaffected virtuosity.

Less accessible were the movements, each specific to a particular item of military hardware from shield to sword, which accompanied the playing of a ceramic drum, chanting and the occasional ringing of a bell. They occupied most of the second half, and clearly should have conveyed dignity and poise; instead they conjured memories of the stuffy embarrassment of the uninitiated participants in PE classes. Some traditions do not travel.

CHRIS PARKER

## VISUAL ART: Textiles receive avant-garde treatment

### Not a loom in sight

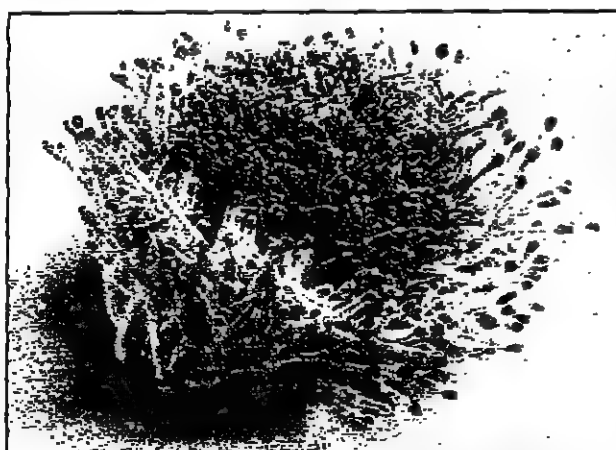
The distinction between fine art and craft no longer exists in *Under Construction* at the Crafts Council Gallery, a selection of experimental work by seven contemporary textile makers. Led by Polish-born tapestry weaver Tadek Beutlich, they have abandoned the loom, conventional lace-making and traditional embroidery to parallel developments in contemporary art.

Beutlich, now 74, began to flout convention as a craftsman, incorporating found material and working in three dimensions more than 30 years ago, just as sculptors such as Joseph Beuys and Barry Flanagan were utilising textiles. But Beutlich's pioneering approach, hailed abroad, is only now breaking down barriers in Britain.

His *Figures on a Scaffold* could be based on Dante's *Inferno* or the Nuremberg trials. Beutlich is not saying. But from bits of sisal and cotton wool, twisted and stretched and dyed the colour of earth, he has produced an extraordinary storytelling sculpture, its harrowing power heightened by its meagre materials.

Beutlich's creations began out of practical constraints. At the end of the war, only darning wool was available from Woolworths in black and white and grey. Later, in Spain, he improvised with esparto grass which he picked for nothing and brightly coloured wools from the local market, which he transformed into large, surrealist floral. His latest pieces are smaller, due to the size of his studio in Kent.

In contrast, one-time embroiderer and lace maker



Pollination by textile sculpture pioneer Tadek Beutlich

Michael Brennan-Wood has created an 18-foot abstract panel, *Field of Centres*, from rags inlaid into a painted wooden base, suggestive of the old-fashioned method of block printing. The rags are torn sheets and pillowcases belonging to his grandmother, a worker in the textile industry, and the result is a lace-like effect on a grand scale, reflecting the former status of lace as a symbol of wealth and culture. Brennan-Wood, who has been studying the lace collections at the Whitworth Art Gallery in Manchester, says he was attracted by the irregularities he found in lace patterns despite their apparent geometric order.

The ephemeral nature of bird tracks in the sand, changing tides and weather preoccupy Polly Binn, who stitches abstract pictures on painted linen; while classical architecture influenced textile printer Rushion Aust to explore three dimensions, making edgy, abstract shapes by wrapping

intersecting wire in striped fabric. Former tapestry student Sally Freshwater has her fabric "fight" the aluminium framework over which it is stretched into the shape of a giant threepenny bit. *Triple Hood* is the work of another former tapestry student turned conceptual artist, Italian-born Clio Padovani. The three hangman-style hoods, joined together and suspended on steel cable, stem from a questioning of identity, also the concern of former jeweller Caroline Broadhead, who devises garments which stand up disconcertingly on their own, dramatising their absent wearer.

The implied presence is made more real and fearful by the garment's corresponding fabric shadow.

ALISON BECKETT

• *Under Construction*: Exploring process in contemporary textiles, runs until August 4 at the Crafts Council Gallery, 44 Pentonville Road, Islington, London N1 (0171-278 7700).

## Even the plot has bare cheek

YOU are wearing a see-through PVC top with gold hearts just covering the nipples. Question: Are you on stage at the Whitehall?

Of course not, for this is a glamorous opening night and you are the glittering audience. This month's fashion colours, you may need to know, are black, white and gold. But will this month's hit show be *Voyeurz*? The front three rows of the stalls worked raucously to present it as an embryonic cult, shouting advice to Jane, the provocatively shy heroine, as she worries about her morals. Apart from this doubtfully disinterested rent-a-claque, the applause at the end was muted.

If it's modes you are after, there are nine of them eventually, and some of the girls rub against each other, if only they fancy the sight of that. Only the dancers strip down. The four singers of *Fem 2 Fem* strut about in fetish gear, as do the three actresses whose duty it is to push forward what I suppose we must call the story. But that's as far down as they go. Perhaps there are contractual reasons for this. No evidence from elsewhere suggests it might reflect a concern for taste.

On her virginal Virginian bed, Jane (Sally Anne Marsh) is sleeping fitfully. And no wonder, because an eight-foot blue crucifix is suspended over her head, representing what she has been told to dream about, while the silent dancers in white underclothes, slithering over her, represent her immediate needs.

"Is there something more for me?" she wonders next morning, in her little-girl voice — I could swear she spoke of her night of "dreams". Off

she goes to New York, where Andi (Krysten Cummings) tries to pick her up on the train but manages only to give her the address of a nightclub. When Jane drops in there, she is desired by ruthless Eve (Natascha Kristie), looking like Snow White's wicked stepmother trying on one of Marie Antoinette's wigs.

The ensuing struggle for Jane's heart is ineptly told. Andi's character does a somewhat and "I'm sorry" is what she mostly sings from now on. The music is a succession of loud songs, dialogue is minimal and almost every number ends in a blackout — a weirdly old-fashioned device.

The dancers jerk their bodies around, clutch their bellies as if at war with constipation, and press welcome hands against breasts, bums and between legs. Up on the scaffolding *Fem 2 Fem* canoodle, below them the dancers writhe in rubber sheets (quite watchable), crack whips (oh dear) and posture. That essentially explains the disappointment of this show, written and directed by Michael Lewis and Peter Ralston. All those "dark secret fantasies and forbidden desires" we are invited to be voyeurs of, they aren't dark or secret or forbidden any longer. Pretending they still are, and without comedy or wit, this show may provoke the audience into clapping its energy, but not its content.

JEREMY KINGSTON

## Crash the party

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*Gina's Wedding*. In this hilarious satire, taking place nightly at the Café Royal in London's West End, members of the audience are also guests at the wedding. After the ceremony you'll meet the family and, after the wedding breakfast (or, in this case, a three-course dinner) you'll be able to dance the night away to music played by a five-piece band.

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LONDON

Donmar Warehouse

July 30-31, Aug 2

• ENGLISH Touring Theatre presents a translation, by Kenneth McLeish, of Ibsen's *Hedda Gabler*. Alexandra Gilbreath takes the title role in this powerful story of a woman ahead of her time who pays the ultimate price for her freedom. Top-priced tickets for only £12 (normally £16.50 and £18). Tel 0171-369 1732

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• TICKETS £8.50 (normally £10) to an outdoor performance of Shakespeare's *The Taming of the Shrew*. Tel 0171-631 9041

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## CREATIVE STUDIO SECRETARIAL ASSISTANT

Required for expanding Fashion Design Company in Central London. Secret candidate will be computer literate, self-motivated and experienced in fashion retail. Can you bring order to a small, dynamic team?

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Andrew/Sarah

PERSONNEL/ADMIN MANAGER

£20,000 neg + bene.

Age 25-35, Fashion Co W1.

Hands on senior level post

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functions. Prev exp in retail helpful.

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REACHAMP BUREAU

## £30,000 neg.

Grab this exciting opportunity to get involved as Executive Assistant to the brilliant Senior Director of a firm of Management Consultants. You have initiative, organisational flair, possibly languages and definitely IT literacy although it is not, repeat not, typing all day!

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SECRETARIES PLUS

## SENIOR LEGAL SECRETARY/PA

We are a medium-sized firm of solicitors in Chancery Lane. A vacancy has arisen for a secretary to work for a Senior Partner in our Corporate Department. Applicants must have at least two years' similar legal experience. Knowledge of WordPerfect 5.1 is desirable but not essential.

Applications to Jill Spicer

27 Chancery Lane

London WC2A 1NF

NO AGENCIES

## MARKETING PA - CITY LAW FIRM

c.£20,000 pa

Marketing Director and small team need a confident administrator/secretary who enjoys organising events and juggling lots of balls!

Applicants must be educated to 'A' level standard, have secretarial qualifications and must have had 5 years' previous experience in a professional services environment.

Please send CVs to Nicola James, Personnel Officer, Cameron

Medley Hewitt, Senior Dept, 40 Tower Hill, London EC3M 4BB by Friday, 2nd August 1996.

PA TO HR DIRECTOR £18,000

International Communications Co. Based W8, recruiting PA for High Flying Human Resources Director. Use your excellent organisational & secretarial skills to support board level Personnel. Advanced Word/Powerpoint/Excel needed to produce reports & presentation material. Lots of diary/travel/imp arrangements. Please send CV to: HR/PA/Health.

Call Karen Hutchinson 0171 250 0999

Rae Cline

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14K - PRESTIGIOUS HEALTH CLUB - Unusual, exciting & dynamic role in immaculately presented, enviable setting with people and keen on fitness. 250

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25K - PUBLIC RELATIONS - The dynamic and fast paced environment of a leading PR firm. Excellent salary and benefits. 250

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## MAINE-TUCKER

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The Chief Executive of a leading production company needs an experienced PA to manage a top PA and not a budding film producer. Previous experience in production industry, experience in a senior PA role, excellent organisational skills, ability to manage a team, excellent communication skills, ability to deal with the public, ability to deal with the press, ability to deal with the media, ability to deal with the government, ability to deal with the police, ability to deal with the courts, ability to deal with the army, ability to deal with the navy, ability to deal with the air force, ability to deal with the coast guard, ability to deal with the fire service, ability to deal with the ambulance service, ability to deal with the prison service, ability to deal with the probation service, ability to deal with the social services, ability to deal with the housing authority, ability to deal with the council, ability to deal with the local authority, ability to deal with the central government, ability to deal with the foreign office, ability to deal with the Home Office, ability to deal with the Ministry of 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## Kempton to have £8 million facelift

J. Daniels	20	104	19.2	T. Quinn	28	192	13.0
Miss G. Kellaway	3	16	18.8	Dane O'Hall	4	30	13.5
J. F. [unclear]	13	71	18.3	W. Ryan	10	81	12.3
F. Bakling	17	360	17.0	T. [unclear]	20	191	10.5

T. Quinn	28	192	13.5
Dane O'Neil	4	30	12.3
W. Ryan	10	81	12.3
J. Smith	20	101	10.5







# OLYMPIC GAMES: NEW DISCIPLINE GETS MIXED RECEPTION A LONG WAY FROM RUISLIP LIDO

## Beach party lacks good vibrations

WHATEVER traces of dignity that remained in the modern Olympics vanished on the road to Atlanta Beach yesterday. There is nothing new in the concept of bronzed bodies frolicking about in the name of sport. The ancient Greeks did it all the time. But not, I suspect, to the tune of the Beach Boys and the nasal tones of a downhome commentator exhorting everyone to give a big Atlanta Beach welcome to the two teams.

"Match-point opportunity no. 1, 14 serves four," he announced, moments before the Bournemouth beach-trained pair of Amanda Glover and Audrey Cooper were beaten by the formidable team of Natalie Cook and Kerri-Ann Pottharst, from Australia. Ladies and gentlemen, this is the first day of Olympic beach volleyball at the Centennial Olympics.

I know, hard to believe, isn't it? There are two reasons why beach volleyball has made its debut in these Olympics: first, it is visual, which means that the women wear very little and the men have big muscles; second, the United States will, in all probability, win two gold medals. They ought to: they have more sand than most countries, they invented the game (in California, 66 years ago, apparently) and they also have more teams than any other country.

The United States, as host country, is allowed three teams. Every other country is allowed two in each of the competitions, men and women. As there are 24 men's teams and 18 women's in the Olympic events, the percentage chances of home success are high. That heightens the interest of NBC, the US television network system, which has, in any case, narrowed down its coverage to just the home teams and can be guaranteed to glorify a home victory.

The Americans, like the Austrians, the Brazilians and, more



Andrew Longmore

lians, the Brazilians and, more perversely, the Dutch and the Japanese, are professional. Top players can earn £300,000 a year from the professional circuit in the States. Gabrielle Reece, the 6ft 3in Amazonian star of the Nike advertisements, will not get out of bed for less than £25,000 to do a modelling session. Her beach volleyball is clearly not as hot. She did not qualify for any of the American teams, which must have pained her sponsors.

The British, bless them, are very amateur. A few afternoons on the Ruislip Lido with a portable roll-out-your-own-net system, goggles for rain or shine, and a session or two alongside Bournemouth pier. If they want to practise in winter, they have to travel to Holland and Italy. Their sport costs them money. But it is worth it: they have reached the Olympic Games. "And we deserve to be here," Cooper said. "People still regard beach volleyball as something to do when you're on holiday, until they

come and see it. As you can see, it's a great spectator sport. It's another discipline of volleyball. All of that is true. No one can deny the dedication of the two British players, even if one of them, Glover, has a natural advantage.

She was born in Weymouth and works as a recreation attendant at the Britannia Leisure Centre in Hasteley, Dorset, at 32, the elder by six years, works in the publicity department of Ruislip, the team's sponsor. Both played indoor volleyball, the six-sided version, until Britain ceased to field a women's team. "We both wanted to keep playing internationally and this was the only way," Glover added. "It's more fun, anyway."

More exciting, too. Up to a point. The athleticism required for two people to cover nine square metres of court is unquestionable, but the game lacks variety. One player, usually the smaller and quicker of the two, runs around at the back of the court, making saves and setting up the kill for the front player. Diving is compulsory, along with high dives, 30-second breaks and loud rock music.

Not only the costumes are stamped "wardrobe by Boywatch" the bickering is pure soap opera, too. The American duo of Holly McPeak and Nancy Reno split up last year, allegedly because Reno, a strong feminist, objected to her partner's off-season breast implants. They are back together "on the same page", as they put it, although Reno wore a T-shirt to McPeak's bikini top yesterday.

The Brazilians are equally hot-tempered. "Sometimes I go crazy and I want to kill Sandra," Jackie Silva, the national champion, said of Sandra Pires, her partner. "When I have a bathing suit on, I feel like it's time to fight," she added. An afternoon on Ruislip Lido might cool the blood.



Monica Rodriguez, of Brazil, dives to keep the ball alive but could not prevent a 17-15 defeat by Italy yesterday

## Devalued noble art fights to make its point

By Andrew Longmore

THE air is thick with conspiracy theories down at the Alexander Memorial Coliseum, home of the Georgia Tech basketball team and venue for the Olympic boxing.

The latest has it that Muhammad Ali's cinematic, almost tragic, role in the opening ceremony was designed principally to advertise the awful effects of boxing, thereby giving Juan Samaran, president of the International Olympic Committee, further soil with which to bury such a mucky sport. Samaran, it is said, would prefer to have roller-hockey or some other such sponsor-friendly sport in his Olympics instead of boxing.

Boxing has responded by trying to make itself an acceptable, clean, healthy, look-at-me sport. Headguards have long been compulsory, though their benefits have yet to be proved conclusively, and the scoring system in which five judges press blue or red buttons to record successful punches makes it seem as if no one connects at all. Three of the five must press within one second to register the point. A flurry of blows will be rewarded by one point. Bouts are won by scores such as 8-6 and judges who award too many points are likely to find themselves dismissed. It is only a matter of time until an Olympic bout is won by one punch to nil.

But NBC has still refused to televise the boxing in prime time for fear of alienating its female viewers and because watching a succession of Cubans win gold is bad for national morale. Since Roy Jones was deprived of gold in Seoul by a fixed verdict in favour of a Korean, the American networks have rather lost their taste for amateur boxing, though tickets are not property on the black market.

The Cubans excepted, the victors are not necessarily the best boxers. They are the ones who play the system best. It has always been so, but this is more blatant. The well-coached fighters know exactly where the judges are - two are positioned on one side of the ring, one each on the other three sides - and play to the gallery accordingly.

There is no point in throwing three, four or five-punch combinations," Ian Irwin, the British team coach, said. "The scoring machines won't record them. So you have to throw single and double punches."

British amateur boxing is fighting for its life too, as Irwin is well aware. A fax from John Morris, secretary of the British Boxing Board of Control, on the morning of the preliminary bouts contained some trace of good news. Not only did Morris wish the British boxers, all two of them, the best of luck, he suggested that Irwin come and have a chat on his return home. "There has to be more continuity between amateur and professional boxing," Irwin said. "And more money coming into the amateur coffers to stop talented young men from taking the professional shilling before they are ready."

Something has to be done. Where once Britain sent a whole team of boxers, and produced its share of Olympic champions, it is now a third-world boxing nation. Only the featherweight, David Burke, qualified for the Olympics by reaching the last four of the European championships. Britain's heavyweight representative, Fola Okeola, who faces Nate Jones, the American champion, tomorrow, gained entry through the tradesmen's entrance when another qualified boxer pulled out. It is a sorry tale.

Burke's defeat by the German, Falk Huster, in his first bout reduced the British presence by 50 per cent. Burke, aged 21 and from the good boxing territory of Liverpool, did not play the system. Instead of going forward and piling on the points, he retreated and allowed his more experienced opponent to dictate the bout. By the time he had worked out a method, the contest was out of reach.

There is no shortage of talent, but the young are turning professional quicker now," Irwin said. "We need time and money to nurture that talent. We also have to teach them to box to the scoring system - box and not get hit."

Not everyone agrees that the scoring system favours good defence. Critics point out that showy punching, mostly to the head, brings more rewards than solid body blows. Boxing is not an exact science. Artistic impression is important as well, the feel of a fight, who is the stronger and cleverer. If boxing is to be reduced to simply an antiseptic pit-pat, perhaps it is time to bring on roller hockey.

## Madrigali makes most of breeze to win first race

FROM EDWARD GORMAN  
SAILING CORRESPONDENT  
IN SAVANNAH

JEFF MADRIGALI, the American Soling skipper, found a breeze that few others, including Andy Beardsworth, of Great Britain, could detect at the Olympic regatta here early yesterday, to secure victory in the first race.

The Solings was one of only three classes that managed to complete a race on the first day as calm,

followed by thunderstorms, forced the postponement of 13 of the scheduled 16 races.

While all the leading boats, including Beardsworth, who had established himself in seventh, a position he held to the finish, went down the middle, Madrigali went out to the right. Sailing higher, he swept into the leeward mark in the lead and was never passed.

At the finish, he was 5.5sec ahead of Georgy Shayduko, the world champion, in second with Mar-



shall King, of Ireland, in an excellent third place. Jochen Schuemann, of Germany, who had followed Madrigali wide, was eventually fifth.

Stig Westergaard, who is sailing the Soling team's reserve boat after his British-built yacht was

found to be illegal, finished a lowly eighteenth in the 22-strong fleet. Yesterday, Petticrow's, of Burnham-on-Crouch, Essex, who built the yacht, issued a statement saying it had been built in good faith and that "every effort had been made to ensure it would comply with Soling Class rules".

Glyn Charles and George Skroodas, of Great Britain, finished fifteenth in the Star class. The race was won on the water by Ross McDonald, of Canada, but he was

disqualified after a protest over a mark-rounding incident with the defending champion, Mark Reynolds, of the United States. Torben Grael, the Brazilian, was promoted to first with Rod Davis, of New Zealand, second and Reynolds third.

The only other class to complete a race was the Finn, in which Richard Stenhouse, of Britain, came eighteenth out of 29. The race was won by José Maria van der Ploeg, of Spain.

## Venue choice has sailors in a state

Edward Gorman on the shortcomings of Savannah for Olympic competition

When you first see the so-called Olympic day-marina out in Wassaw Sound at the mouth of the Savannah and Wilmington rivers, it is hard not to think of a film set. The row of gleaming white tents out in the swamp, with their long roof-top penons streaming in the breeze, has been likened to the Moorish army camped on the beach in *El Cid*.

To others, the size and technical complexity of the marina, and its remote setting, suggest something out of *Apocalypse Now*. Stepping onto the huge barges, where hundreds of competitors, their coaches and technical staff were beavering away in a case of controlled chaos in the middle of nowhere, was

It is as unsuitable for racing as could be. The marina is a 20-minute drive from the city. The marina is constructed mainly from old American Army bridging barges. It is designed in an E-shape and covers 150,000 square feet, with just enough room to cram a tent for each team, its bunks and gear. It has its own chandlery, press centre and hospital. To say it is a logistical challenge comparable to running a small army in battle.

Everyone who goes there has to spend half an hour on a launch, travelling down river from the management centre. The marina has to be supplied with 20,000 gallons of water every day, fuel for its generators, and everything else from ice to hamburgers. At night it is guarded by American Marines, and every morning they dive under it to check for landmines.

Even from the marina, the sailors have a long way to go to the racing areas on the Atlantic, with the Solings averaging about an hour and a quarter in light winds. It should never have happened. The International Yacht Racing Union, the sport's governing body, should have put its foot down from the outset and insisted on somewhere else, out of Georgia.

<p><b>Baseball</b></p> <p>Round-robin</p> <p>Holland 14 Australia 6; Nicaragua 7 Italy 2; United States 7 South Korea 2.</p> <p><b>Basketball</b></p> <p>Men's preliminary round</p> <p>POOL A: Croatia 100 China 78; Argentina 88 Lithuania 81; United States 87 Angola 54.</p> <p>POOL B: Greece 80 Brazil 67; Puerto Rico 88 South Korea 68; Yugoslavia 81 Australia 68.</p> <p><b>Boxing</b></p> <p>First round</p> <p>POOL A: 1. P. Palfrey (AUS) vs. S. Shin (KOR) 2-1; 2. S. Shin (KOR) vs. S. Shin (KOR) 2-1; 3. S. Shin (KOR) vs. S. Shin (KOR) 2-1; 4. S. Shin (KOR) vs. S. Shin (KOR) 2-1; 5. S. Shin (KOR) vs. S. Shin (KOR) 2-1; 6. S. Shin (KOR) vs. S. Shin (KOR) 2-1; 7. S. Shin (KOR) vs. S. Shin (KOR) 2-1; 8. S. Shin (KOR) vs. S. Shin (KOR) 2-1; 9. S. Shin (KOR) vs. S. Shin (KOR) 2-1; 10. S. Shin (KOR) vs. S. Shin (KOR) 2-1; 11. S. Shin (KOR) vs. S. Shin (KOR) 2-1; 12. S. Shin (KOR) vs. S. Shin (KOR) 2-1; 13. S. Shin (KOR) vs. S. Shin (KOR) 2-1; 14. S. Shin (KOR) vs. S. Shin (KOR) 2-1; 15. S. 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## ATLANTA '96: THE COMPLETE GUIDE

Boxers are being escorted to the ring at the Alexander Memorial Coliseum by a former United States amateur called Tony Hembrick who became famous in the 1998 Olympics for missing his first bout Hembrick, a middleweight, misread the schedule and thought he was eleventh on the card. In fact, he was third. He arrived just as his bout was being called, and he forfeited his contest. No one has had such problems in Atlanta yet, though with the dodgy transport system it is surely only a matter of time. David Burke, one of only two British boxers at the Games, lost his first bout, and it did not look good when Brian Magee, a 21-year-old from Lisburn in Northern Ireland, was knocked down inside the first minute by Randall Thompson, of Canada. Magee, though, recovered to win on points and was given a standing ovation. The surprise of the afternoon was the victory of Phil Ndu, the most talented of the young South Africa team, over Casey Patton, the silver medal-winner in Barcelona. AL

An Italian fencer has found out about Atlanta bureaucracy the hard way. At some point he left his accreditation card in the locker-room and left the area. The problem arose when he tried to report for his next fight: the security staff, seeing no card, refused him entry. Getting his card back was also a problem, since the security functionary lay squarely between him and the locker-room. Initiative has proved not to be a strong point of Atlanta officialdom. Security men are also being kept busy in the fencing tournament. Police assistance was required on Monday night when Philippe Omnès, the Olympic foil champion from France, and Elvis Gregory, of Cuba, ended their duel with a disagreement. Meanwhile, James Williams was effectively robbed in Sunday's sabre event. Perhaps it is just as well his main sponsor, Bruce Dickinson (formerly the lead singer of Iron Maiden, the rock band), failed to make it to Atlanta. Dickinson's record company intended to fund the trip until they saw Atlanta's prices. GM

The afternoon thunderstorms are making life difficult at the Olympic sailing regatta in Savannah. They are causing enough trouble for the sailors and the regatta organisers, who are already well behind schedule. But spare a thought for the helicopter pilots and cameramen who are beaming live pictures from the racing area back to Atlanta for distribution around the world. On Monday the three choppers hung over the Fins course to the very end and to capture José María van der Ploeg, of Spain, winning the first race of the Games. It was a brave decision by the experienced American pilots who could see the first of the day's thunderstorms, that was shortly to force the abandonment of all racing, rapidly closing in on them from the north-east. As soon as the race was over they tried to escape but it was too late — they were forced to land on the beach. John Boddecker, one of five operators of gyro-stabilised cameras on the aircraft, said he had never been so scared in his life. EG

Reports: Andrew Longmore, Graham Morrison, Edward Gorman

## HOT SPOT

Great Britain has not had a distinguished start to the judo competition. Two of the best hopes for a medal, lightweights Nicola Fairbrother and Danny Kingston, will both be fighting today. Fairbrother was second in Barcelona in 1992 and took the world title the following year. Kingston is the fighter in form: the new European lightweight champion, he is rapidly fulfilling his potential. TV: BBC2 from 9.0pm

No sooner had the British Olympic Association solved one unusual problem by extricating Chen Xinhua, its top table tennis player, from being stranded in China for five days, than it was saddled with another. The China-born Chen almost came to blows with his English team-mate in last year's world championships, and putting them in the same room in Atlanta was considered by Alan Ramsome, the British manager, to be unwise. Chen should hardly be in the mood for aggravation, after being given an itinerary taking him on three flights from Fujian to Hong Kong, Singapore and Frankfurt before getting to Atlanta, and requiring more than 24 hours of exhausting travel. It rather defeated the object of staying in his home town — to give him better preparation (through better practice partners and a similar climate). In Barcelona four years ago, the Chinese prohibited Chen from appearing for Great Britain, as they were entitled to do. But did they deliberately deny him flights from Fujian to Peking this time? RE

There are only two days to go until the athletics begins and there is still no sign of Ato Boldon and Jon Drummond falling out. Medal contenders in the 100 metres, they are the best of friends and have been sharing a house here. Two more contrasting characters you could not imagine, tolerating each other's excesses, and they never row, apparently, over whether the television, or the CD player, should be on. Drummond sings with the gospel group, Kirk Franklin and the Family, whose first album reached No 1 in the gospel charts in 1993. Drummond, from Philadelphia, calls himself the Clown Prince of Track. Fair enough. He performs cartwheels, somersaults, and climbs into the stands to kiss strangers after races. Boldon, from Trinidad, is one of the quiet men. He has an obsession for watching videos of, and learning from, past masters of his craft. He must dread the thought of Drummond winning the final on Saturday and having to study him. DP

Enthused by Nick Gillingham's tales, Greg Rusedelski, the Canadian-born British tennis player, paid \$100 for a ticket to watch the swimming on the day James Hickman set a national record in the 200 metres butterfly. Gillingham, who races in the 200 metres breaststroke today, is rooming with Hickman. "I've got the top bunk and he's below... he was so excited about his race, it was like *The Waltons*. 'Good night James, good night Nick', then he'd be off again. Meanwhile, Australian sprinter took a dip with the news that Dawn Fraser was suffering from angina and would not see Janet Evans and Krzstina Egervágy attempt to emulate her feat of winning the same event at three Games tomorrow. Had Fraser not been barred from the Mexico Games in 1968, having "swiped" the Olympic flag in Tokyo, she could have won four 100 metres freestyle titles. "She's got to rest in hospital for four days," said Ian Hanson, media officer for the Australia team, "but at least the flags are safe..." CL

Reports: Richard Eaton, David Powell, Craig Lord

	Gold	Silver	Bronze		Gold	Silver	Bronze
Russia	7	2	2	Germany	0	5	7
United States	4	9	2	Belarus	0	2	1
Poland	4	1	0	Cuba	0	2	1
China	3	4	3	Greece	0	2	0
France	3	3	5	Brazil	0	1	2
South Korea	3	1	0	Sweden	0	1	1
Turkey	3	0	0	Austria	0	1	0
Italy	2	2	2	Japan	0	1	0
Belgium	2	0	1	Spain	0	1	0
Ireland	2	0	0	Uzbekistan	0	1	0
Australia	1	0	3	Bulgaria	0	0	4
South Africa	1	0	1	Hungary	0	0	3
Costa Rica	1	0	0	Holland	0	0	3
Kazakhstan	1	0	0	Canada	0	0	2
New Zealand	1	0	0	Ukraine	0	0	1
Romania	1	0	0	Yugoslavia	0	0	1

At end of Monday's events

Weather: sunny Humidity: 77% Temperature: 78F

## TODAY AT THE GAMES

All times BST

**BADMINTON:** Men's and women's singles, first round (14.00, 19.00 and 01.00)  
**BASEBALL:** Round-robin: Italy v United States (20.00); South Korea v Cuba (01.00)  
**BASKETBALL:** Men's preliminary round: Pool A: China v Argentina (15.00); Croatia v Angola (22.00); Lithuania v United States (03.00) Pool B: Yugoslavia v South Korea (17.00); Australia v Brazil (20.00); Greece v Puerto Rico (01.00)  
**BEACH VOLLEYBALL:** Men's and women's round-robin (14.00 and 19.00)  
**BOXING:** First round light-welterweight and light-heavyweight, 19.30 and 01.00

**CYCLING:** Men: Individual pursuit, qualification (15.00) and quarter-finals (18.00); 1km time-trial, final (16.45); sprint, qualification (21.30), first round (22.30) and repechages (23.30) Women: Sprint, qualification (18.15)  
**EQUESTRIANISM:** Three-day event: Team jumping (final discipline, 14.00); individual dressage (second day, 20.00)  
**FENCING:** Men's team sabre, preliminaries (16.00) and final stages (20.00); women's team épée, preliminaries (13.00) and final stages (20.00)  
**FOOTBALL:** Men's preliminary round: Pool A: United States v Portugal, Argentina v Tunisia (00.30) Pool B: France v Saudi Arabia, Spain v Australia (00.00)  
**GYMNASTICS:** Men's individual all-round final (21.15)  
**HANDBALL:** Men's preliminary round: Pool A: Russia v Kuwait (15.00); Croatia v Switzerland (19.30); Sweden v United States (00.00) Pool B: France v Spain (17.00); Egypt v Algeria (21.30); Germany v Brazil (02.00)

**HOCKEY:** Men's preliminary round: Pool A: United States v India (14.00); Spain v Argentina (22.30); Germany v Pakistan (01.00)  
**JUDO:** Men's under 71kg and women's under 56kg, preliminaries (14.30) and finals (20.00)  
**ROWING:** Men: Repechages: Lightweight double sculls (14.00); lightweight coxless fours (15.00); quadruple sculls (15.50); eights (16.10) Women: Repechages: Lightweight double sculls (14.30); quadruple sculls (15.30); eights (16.00)  
**SHOOTING:** Men: Double trap, preliminaries (14.00) and final (19.30); 25-metre rapid fire pistol, preliminaries (15.00) Women: 50-metre standard rifle, three-position, preliminaries (10.30) and final (17.00)  
**SOFTBALL:** Round-robin: United States v Taiwan (14.00); Puerto Rico v China (15.30); Australia v Holland (23.30); Japan v Canada (02.00)  
**SWIMMING:** Heats at 15.05 for evening finals plus women's 800m freestyle. Finals: Men: 200m breast-

stroke (00.33); 100m butterfly (01.19) Women: 200m individual medley (00.55); 4 x 100m medley relay (01.39)  
**TABLE TENNIS:** Men's singles, round-robin (15.00); men's and women's doubles, round-robin (00.00)  
**TENNIS:** Men's and women's singles, first round (15.00)  
**VOLLEYBALL:** Women's preliminary round: Pool A: Japan v Holland (15.00); United States v China (00.30); South Korea v Ukraine (03.00) Pool B: Canada v Germany (17.30); Brazil v Russia (21.00); Peru v Cuba (23.30)  
**WATER POLO:** Preliminary round: Pool A: Hungary v Yugoslavia (16.00); Spain v Russia (17.40); Holland v Germany (21.40) Pool B: Greece v Ukraine (20.00); Italy v Romania (23.20); Croatia v United States (03.00)  
**WEIGHTLIFTING:** Under 76kg: Group B (17.30) and Group A (final, 21.00)  
**YACHTING:** Two races to be sailed in each class, men's and women's Mistral, men's and women's 470, men's Finn, women's Europe, Laser, Star (18.00)

## WHEN TO WATCH ON TELEVISION

BBC1

7.0am-12.35pm Olympic Grandstand, 1.40-5.35pm Olympic Grandstand, 7.0-9.0pm The Essential Olympics, 10.20pm-4.25am Olympic Grandstand

BBC2

9.10-10.20pm Olympic Grandstand Eurosport 24-hour coverage

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## OLYMPIC GAMES

# Stark comes to grief as Australia break clear

FROM JENNY MACARTHUR IN ATLANTA

AUSTRALIA, the defending champions, swept into a 61-point lead in the Olympic three-day event contest after an incident-filled speed and endurance phase in the Georgia International Horse Park yesterday. On a day when it was not the heat (88F) which dictated the outcome but the rider's ability to "read" the punishing, undulating course, the United States, the overnight leaders, were relegated



to second place. New Zealand, the favourites, are lying third. Great Britain's day began disastrously, when Ian Stark and Stanwick Ghost fell at the first water complex. With William Fox-Pitt and Cosmopolitan also incurring 20 jumping penalties, it was only the heroic clear rounds of Gary Parsonage, on Magic Rogue — competing in the team for the first time — and Karen Dixon, on Too Smart, which kept Britain, second overnight, in the medal hunt in sixth place.

From the moment that New Zealand's former world champion, Blyth Tait, on Chesterfield, set out at 8.20am, the severity of the course was never in doubt. Tait, one of the most experienced competitors in the field, had to ride every inch of the way to bring Chesterfield home clear.

Although the course was shorter than for a usual four-star event — in reference to the expected conditions — it was the difficult terrain and the angle at which many of the fences were sited which caused many of the problems. Only one horse, Upton, ridden by Jacques Dulcy, of France, finished inside the optimum time.

Fox-Pitt, who said his horse, Cosmopolitan, finished no more tired than at an English

event, was one of several riders to sustain a fall on the flat after watering had made patches of the course "like black ice". The fall, in front of fence 17, the Olympic Rings, was not penalised as it did not occur at the actual fence. He attributed his refusal at fence eight — an uncomfortable bounce of two mud huts where Vicky Latta, of New Zealand, on Broadcast News, came to grief — to Cosmopolitan's belief that he was expected to jump them both in one.

Stark's ten-year-old Stanwick Ghost set out "jumping like a star" but he had his eye at fence 11 firmly set at the brush fence out of the water, rather than the small step up in front. Despite the spectacular fall, Stark quickly remounted Stanwick Ghost, who finished the course full of running.

Despite these early disasters the phlegmatic Parsonage said that he felt under no pressure as he entered the start box for the cross-country. "I just wanted to get round clear, that's what I was brought here to do," he said.

True to his word, he produced a workmanlike, round with no faults to lift morale within the British camp. Dixon, despite some hairy moments on the impetuous Too Smart, used all of her considerable experience to continue the team's rehabilitation.

Australia forged ahead after outstanding rounds from their first two riders — Wendy Schaeffer, on the extravagant jumper Sunburst, and Phillip Dutton, on True Blue Girdwood.

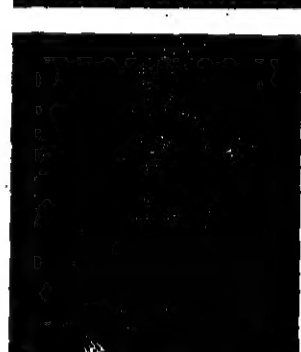
Schaeffer's attacking round — just nine weeks after breaking her leg in a schooling accident — summed up the sheer grit and determination of the Australians who, with their fourth rider, Andrew Hoy on Darien Powers, also going clear, can now afford to have 12 fences down in today's showjumping and still retain the gold medal.



Stark, of Great Britain, guides Stanwick Ghost through a water hazard during the speed and endurance phase of the three-day event

## Protesters picking on the wrong target

SIMON BARNES



Atlanta sketch

DO ANIMALS have rights? This question is brought into pin-sharp focus whenever horses jump. The three-day event here has excited all kinds of concern from those who hold out for animal rights, and you can see what they mean.

The cross-country stage of a three-day event is perhaps the most dramatic thing humans and animals ever do together. The joint courage of horse and rider is quite astounding. Nothing in sport can touch it.

The Grand National? That is a different matter. It is the madness of herd instinct that is at the heart of steeplechasing. In eventing, we are dealing in an altogether different currency: trust. It is the only form of payment that is acceptable. Without mutual trust in each other's skill, courage and athleticism, there is simply no way round a cross-country course.

That is what lends a special poignancy, a special drama, to the inevitable falls. A fall in cross-country is almost like a divorce, a failure of trust, and often the question of who is to blame is unanswerable.

The question of cruelty is always brought up for the Olympic three-day event. It has been gone in to remorselessly and at length here, and quite rightly, too. It really is much too hot for galloping a horse. Yet the vets seem to be the only people at these chaotic Games who have thought ahead. The enforced breaks and cooling stations with the banks of fans blasting atomised water over grateful horses, have worked.

"They are finishing with temperatures no higher than in the UK," the British rider, William Fox-Pitt, said. "My horse is really fresh coming off the chase, and he was really bright." Ginny McGrath, of Ireland, went a step further: "This is the first three-day event where I haven't had to worry about my horse cooling down."

A great deal of planning and serious thought have gone in to making things comfortable for the horses, but also a great deal of planning and serious thought have gone in to making a course that stretches them to the utmost. Therein lies the

essential paradox of the business. Sitting in a press tent at an eventing press gathering I know, screams, gasps, oaths and terrible blasphemies greet every mistake. Everyone really cares — it is that kind of occasion, last year's leading the Brits as a reminder, took the most appalling punter. My own "Oh God" was more prayer than blasphemy.

You always think that either the rider or the horse is dead, probably both. Poor old Stanwick Ghost, wonderfully willing, whacked his fence coming out of the water. He hit it so hard that he came within a touch of going head over heels. Now that really might have killed them both.

Stark got up, shaken not stirred. Next thing, rider and horse had patched up their differences, settled out of court. The divorce was off again and so were they, galloping as if mistrust between horse and man were inconceivable. "I jumped the fence and he didn't," Stark said in the glorious aftermath of competition. "Unfortunately that doesn't count in the Olympics. The horse is fine. We had a brilliant finish."

The heat was not a problem for him. "So far as I am concerned, it puts the animal rights people in their place," he said. "We are as concerned as them." Meanwhile, the competition's chief vet, Kent Allen, said that animal rights people "would be disappointed today". This, of course, is

graceless nonsense. Any person concerned about animal rights will be absolutely delighted that the horses' welfare was taken so seriously, and that the measures taken for them were so effective.

We are right to be concerned about the welfare of our beasts. But, really, three-day eventing is the worst possible target for anyone seriously concerned with animal rights. The horses, tested to the limit, are also loved and pampered to the limit. With luck, a wonderfully exhilarating, competitive life is followed by a long and comfortable retirement. Animal rights enthusiasts could find better targets.

Animals have rights, all right, but these rights were taken with appropriate seriousness at the three-day event. As for the paradox of why you must test your cherished beast over fences that terrify the life out of you, I cannot answer. It is the mystery of mysteries. Perhaps it is to do with the wonder of trusting an animal of a different species, but of being trusted.

## Dramatic Haining makes light of heavy challenge

FROM MIKE ROSEWELL, ROWING CORRESPONDENT IN GAINESVILLE

PETER HAINING and Guin Batten both qualified for their sculls semi-finals on Lake Lanier yesterday. Haining, with the drama he inevitably generates and Batten with a coolness which belied her achievement.

There were those who thought that Haining, world lightweight champion for the past three years, would not qualify for Atlanta as a heavyweight. He did.

Others said he would not make the top 12. He did that yesterday in a remarkable race into an unfriendly headwind when he had to finish first or second, where first was booked by the world champion, Izok Cop, of Slovenia.

Fourth at 500 metres, Haining moved past the Finn, Soderblom, at 800 metres, but the young Australian, David Cameron, was 14 lengths ahead of him at halfway. Haining did a scheduled push at 1,250 metres and crept back, finally moving to second, and semi-final qualification at 1,700 metres. "David rowed



past me at Lucerne," said Haining. "Now I have returned the compliment."

Batten, who is Haining's training partner, under coach, Miles Forbes-Thomson who changed the boat rigging of both his protégés yesterday, qualified less dramatically. Heading to finish in the top three, she saw the German, Meike Evers, as "the opponent to target". At halfway, with the German lying fourth, the aim was achieved and Batten relaxed. "I dropped my race profile then. My objective was just to finish third," she said.

Bill Mason, the coach, not overjoyed at the performance of his women's eight on Monday, was uplifted when the crew's two spare rowers, Philippa Cross and Kate Mackenzie reached the semi-final of the women's pairs yesterday. They led at the start, were overhauled by the Czechs and South Africans, but held the vital third place to the final.

James Cracknell remained a spectator yesterday after earlier hopes that he would rejoin Rob Thatcher in the double sculls. His temperature was down, but his pulse rate was still high and Guy Pooley remained as substitute.

The British had to finish in the top two of their repechage to reach the semi-final and approached the task bravely being virtually level with Canada at 500 metres. By halfway Canada had moved away and Australia, with the 1992 Olympic champion, Peter Antonio, at bow, had moved to second, and Britain had no reply.

## Disappointing Britons wilt in heats Australia maintain winning record

FROM CRAIG LORD IN ATLANTA

FOR Britain, this was a crucial moment in their aquatic campaign. But a morning that started with high hopes and Paul Palmer's qualification for the final of the 400 metres freestyle and ended with a British record for the 4 x 100 metres freestyle relay, was largely one of despondency, despair and underachievement.

Palmer, 21, from Lincoln, said he felt "heavy and a bit tired" but "hopeful for later" after beating Tom Dolan, the American tipped to win a final he failed to make, in the heats.

After Palmer, British observers could be excused for thinking they had been transported to Wimbledon as Britain after Britain failed to make the grade. Marie Hardman, of Birmingham, could only manage 2mins 31.12sec, half a second outside her best, for twelfth place. She was the best.

The worst came from Neil Willey and Martin Harris, respectively third and fifth fastest in the world coming into Atlanta, who both failed to make the final of the 100m backstroke. Willey made the B final with a fifteenth place, but there was

no second swim for Harris, who was 26th. Caroline Foot, at 31 the oldest team member, was also well off her best to finish 27th in the 100 metres butterfly.

The session ended on a more hopeful note, though. The quartet of Nicholas Shackell, Alan Rapley, Mark Stevens and Mike Fibbens shaved 0.07sec off the British record set in Barcelona, 1992, as 3min 21.34sec proved good enough to qualify in eighth place for the 4 x 100 metres freestyle relay final. Stevens, from Maclefield, swam a 49.97sec split, his first time under 50sec.

AUSTRALIA consolidated their position at the top of the table in the women's Olympic hockey tournament yesterday, with a 1-0 victory over Germany (Sydney Friskin writes). It was Australia's third successive win and they are now the only team with maximum points.

Danni Roche scored the winning goal in the 25th minute with a fine solo effort after picking up a clearance near the 25-yard line.

Australia and the second-placed Germans seem unlikely to have the race all to themselves. Behind are the United States and South Korea, both with medal hopes. The Koreans were unlucky to lose 3-2 on the



previous day to the Americans, who scored the winning goal five seconds from time through Barbara Marois. Argentina lifted themselves off the bottom of the table with a 1-0 victory over Spain, from a goal in the 44th minute by Jorgelina Rimoldi.

Fortunes continued to fluctuate in the men's event. On Monday Germany were within two minutes of dropping out of the running in Pool A when Saliger scored to level

the match against India 1-1. In the second half, India had only kept in the match thanks to the goalkeeping of Subbajiah.

Against the run of play, Mukesh Kumar, of India, broke free to score in the 62nd minute but victory was eventually snatched from them. The results left Argentina at the top after a 5-2 victory over the United States. Spain were second on the same number of points.

In Pool B, after the 2-2 draw between Holland and Great Britain, there was no team with maximum points although Holland remain top with three points and Britain are still in the hunt, a point behind.

## Des Loves Shazza show offers poolside light relief

Olympic night four and without doubt the best yet. Great gymnastics, superb swimming and some first-class firing by Des Lynam. But more of Des Loves Shazza later.

Monday night was breakthrough time. When you find yourself getting excited by sports you then know to nothing about... then you can be certain that old Olympic magic is at work again. It should be all downhill from here.

But wait. More gymnastics and swimming? Wasn't that what we had last night and the night before? It is and it's also what we get tonight and tomorrow night as well. Gymnastics, swimming, bit of boxing, the odd hockey match... for those of us doing the Atlanta Games the hard way, the live way, the over-night way, they are hardly proving the spice of sporting life.

But if every night is as good as Monday night, well, to quote the great Barry Davies, "frankly, who cares". Quite why gymnastics and swimming are providing such good television is a bit of a mystery. After all, we British are proving pretty indifferent at both. To such an extent that Hamilton Bland ("Hammy" as Lynam calls him) has got the delivery of ill-hidings down to a fine art. "And now the final of... unfortunately Karen/Sarah/Helen/the 4x100 metres freestyle team just missed out in the heats... they go in the B final."



MATTHEW BOND ON THE TELEVISION MARATHON

Instead, we win gold medals by proxy. "Congratulations," said Sharron Davies as a still dripping Michelle Smith stepped into shot. "You've won us another gold medal... I mean, you've won Ireland another gold medal." The BBC has taken Smith to its heart in a way that would be difficult to imagine from the more guarded tones of the morning newspapers. Presumably on the basis that even a swimmer is innocent until she has been proven guilty, there was no mention of her husband's steroids ban.

Lynam, having appeared to take a couple of days to shake off Wimbledon-lag, is back on top form. Some preview footage of the gymnastics that lay ahead prompted this gem: "Ah, you see — if only we had only looked after our bodies, we could do things like that." One member of the BBC team, of course, has looked

after her body, a fact which is now being shamelessly exploited by all involved. Most on-the-spot reporters are shot from the shoulders up, I mean, when did you last see Kate Adie or Martin Bell's knees on camera. Sharron Davies, by contrast, is "nice from the little toe up." "Shot, Sharron," said Lynam as the camera lingered over her latest ensemble, "very nice indeed."

"Thanks very much, Des," she replied, clearly happy with a spot of flattery if it furthers her media career. Whether her talents as a reporter further that career remains to be seen. She holds forth with eloquence and enthusiasm, but she does have a habit of forgetting key facts. Des prompts her as gently as he knows how. "I suppose we'd better mention him by name," he said after 60 seconds, which had seen Davies in no danger of identifying Alexander Popov as the subject of her eulogy. "And just remind me of his event again?"

The gymnastics continues (as it will for some days) to pit Barry Davies, Mitch Finner and Christine Still for the BBC against Nick Follows and Monica Phelps for Eurosport. What is impressive (from a Eurosport point of view) is that there really is precious little to choose between them. For the first time, it looks as if Eurosport really will cast off its reputation as a foreign channel that has been dubbed into English.

## Crowd stunned by Popov's brilliance

Craig Lord salutes the elegant Russian who won the best 100 metres in swimming history

ALEXANDER POPOV may have emulated Johnny Weissmuller by retaining his 100 metres freestyle title but this Russian man of gold has no intention of turning his attentions to the silver screen.

Though graced with film-star looks and a pleasing personality, Popov, 24, has no interest in Hollywood. Asked to name his favourite actor, he replied: "This is an American question. I am reality, not them. They must dream about me."

Popov had only 0.07sec in hand over Gary Hall Jr. of the United States, on Monday night, so it was no swimway victory in a final that saw all eight men break 50 seconds — the first time this has happened. Three set national records after qualification which produced eight sub-50 second swims and five national records. In the B final, three competitors broke 50 seconds and there was another national record.

What a shame that an audience so focused (America's favourite word) on its own boy and devastated by his defeat — silver medals are for losers — appeared not to fully appreciate Popov's brilliance.

Unlike the crowd of 7,000 that cheered Weissmuller in Paris (time: 59.0sec) and a similarly enthusiastic throng

in Amsterdam (58.6sec) in 1928, the 15,000 spectators at the Georgia Tech pool were at fever pitch only until the result flashed up: 48.74 to 48.81 in favour of the Russian. With the patriotic volume turned down, Popov was rewarded with polite applause.

Popov had turned 0.09sec behind Hall but still seemed in control. There was no panic, no break of rhythm and no shortening of stroke as the benefit of training up in 90 kilometres a week — a phenomenal amount for a sprinter — paid dividends.

Hours of painstaking drills, his coach, Gennadi Touretski, argues, are the only way to ensure that perfection comes as second-nature under competition pressure.

It was late in 1989 that Touretski, who was talent-spotting, called in at a pool in Sverdlovsk. He took one look at the gangly youth gliding across the water on his back and announced: "Turn him over and he'll be a big star."

Elena Vaishekhovskaia, who helps out with Popov's coaching when Touretski is away, said: "He likes to be a normal man. He's used to working hard, a simple life and talking to ordinary people. Other swimmers are not rivals, just swimmers trying to be first. And he's a swimmer used to coming first."

## Why I'd treat the Olympics the same as any other race

As I have not swum in an Olympics yet, I can not talk from experience about what it is like to be a competitor at the Games. However, I have spoken to many past Olympians and several of the swimmers here in Atlanta about the pressure and emotions of competing in what is probably the biggest competition of their lives.

The occasion affects people in different ways and I had hoped to be able to get among the swimmers poolside to get a personal feel of the atmosphere within the teams. Unfortunately, because of the strict security, this has not been possible, but from a distance you can see, during the warm-ups, for example, the buzz of activity. Nothing special is happening; everybody is just getting on with their job, but, if you took away all the surroundings and just looked into the pool, you could not really see any difference between this and any other large swimming competition.

A lot of people presume that the atmosphere must be extremely intense among the competitors but, in fact, it tends to be fairly relaxed. People are just sitting around, joking, cheering on colleagues or enjoying starting up chants.

Sometimes inexperienced competitors do become overwhelmed by the whole idea of being at the Olympic Games and, as a consequence, they swim badly. My coach, Bill Furniss, has always warned



Olympic diary

me of this problem. Time after time, he has said: "Just because it is the Olympics, Alex, nothing has to change. In the end, it's just another race."

To practise this advice, though, is not always easy. The crowd at a big event can be intimidating and some swimmers find themselves too pressurised by it; others are lifted by the atmosphere and encouraged by all the support. The latter are the swimmers who will perform well. Therefore, at the Olympics, you can be confident that there is going to be a mix of excellent and poor swimmers.

When it comes to losing or swimming badly, you can talk about sadness, disappointment and despair, but often

the predominant feeling is bewilderment. So, often, there is no explanation for: "Why did I swim badly; what went wrong?" The body language will say it all: a frown and a shrug of the shoulders. The worst aspect, however, is that there is nothing you can now do about it. You have had your chance and now it's gone. You are going to have to face another four, long years of training before you can try again. I have got another four years of training to endure, too, but in one way it is a little easier for me at least I know exactly why I did not make it to the Olympics as a swimmer this time round.

Being here as a spectator feels strange and I'd much rather be swimming. I am really enjoying watching, though. I am getting fairly tense and emotional, particularly when my friends and colleagues swim. I have been waving my flag madly and my voice has almost gone... I guess that this is all a part of being here at the Olympic Games.

Although no medals have been won yet by British swimmers, the team as a whole have not done badly; the best chances for medals are still to come, and they are keeping confident. I am not losing hope of seeing the Union Jack flying several times before the end of the week. I am keeping my fingers crossed and I will keep shouting, as I believe my hopes will be fulfilled.



# Suez: a tale of two conflicts

Lamb enthused over the scope of the Sniper, saying: "We will now know the speed range of slow bowlers, the pace of Shane Warne's flipper and the increases in speed when a star batsman comes in or when a fast bowler has just been hit for four, and when a fast bowler tries a slower ball. I like to think I used to do that effectively, but my teammates wanted to know when I might learn how to bowl a quicker one."

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# Losing faith, hope and charity in Walford

People in theatre and television are terribly fond of the phrase "suspension of disbelief" (SoD). It's a clever-sounding utility phrase, handy for propping up all sorts of ailing conversations, particularly when the user is also propping up a bar. Personally, however, I've always had a terrible problem with it. There is something about suspending a disbeliever that sends me into a terrible logical spin. It's like a double negative, but worse.

Each time I have to unravel it back to first principles. Only then I remember that all those linguistic convolutions conceal a simple truth — you are supposed to believe what you are watching. Which brings us to last night's *EastEnders* (BBC1). Put it like this, if Grant Mitchell suddenly leaped against the bar at the Queen Vic and sighed: "Don't know about you bro, but I'm having a spot of bother with the old SoD" I

wouldn't be the least bit surprised. Some of the things that concern me are small things — such as the fact that it is the voice of Mark Fowler that currently urges us to watch four times a week. Now, forgive me if I'm wrong, but I thought Mark ran a fruit and veg stall in Walford. He wouldn't do voice-overs for the BBC, would he? But Todd Carthy, the actor who plays him, might. The result? I am no longer convinced that there is a Mark. I have become an *EastEnders* agnostic. Perhaps Sarah will pray for me.

But I may be past saving. The galloping subplot disease that currently consumes Albert Square is threatening to take credibility well past breaking point. Storylines compete to be badder and sadder than anything that has gone before. Arthur is dead, Mark has HIV, Tiffany is pregnant, Barry is an arsonist, Felix has found his long-lost sister and

Bianca is about to do something she probably shouldn't. And then there is David Wicks, that one man gone-pool littering the square with former wives, mistresses and assorted offspring. The longing for a really dull subplot to come along is overpowering.

The most damaging threat to the dramatic future, however, is the clumsy attempts at humour. Nige and Sanjiv's Seventies night was always going to be a "laff, mate", but nobody ever said what sort of laff. Nigel with his Gary Glitter buff and sparkly cheeks I could take — just — but the shouted telephone message that summoned the star DJ away — "It's your mother-in-law... your wife's in Walford General... the water's been broken" — never.

As for Bianca's rendition of *Save All Your Kisses for Me*, I have a feeling that when that was a hit she



Matthew Bond

wasn't even a twinkle in the Wicks eye. At the end of an exhausting, improbable but still enjoyable evening, only one thing was certain. She certainly wasn't saving all her kisses for Ricky.

Last night's *Double Exposure: The Golden Collar* (BBC2) also featured a musical flashback. Mark McGann walked into a nightclub and asked the DJ to play some

George Michael. This being Liverpool and this being late night BBC2 what he got, of course, was Wham! He got whammed in the eye, whammed on the nose and took several whams to the stomach. He was a mess and so was much of what followed.

But, having said that, Eamon Sexton, the latest young writer to be given his 44 minutes of fame, had created a central character capable of carrying something far more ambitious in scale than this — or at least I think he had. McGann played Jack Tree, a chaotic, workaholic, drink-holic solicitor who specialised in personal injury claims paid for by legal aid. The clever bit was that he saw the compensation awards he obtained for his impoverished clients as a sort of Robin Hood-like redistribution of wealth. The golden collar of the title was the surgical collar of the whiplash victim. On the other hand, Tree

may just have been a bent brief — and I've made the rest of it up.

Given that his character and motivations were never really established, McGann turned in a cracking performance in the lead, and was well supported by Claire Holman, as his more-off-than-on girlfriend, and Scott Williams, as Wham, his attacker turned ally. Whether his name being Wigan (full name Wham Sharn The Car Valting Man) was significant or not, was just one of many things I was left uncertain of in a work where confusion was generated by a shortage of plot left to your own devices, it's surprising how quickly you can tell yourself up in knots and an abundance of dialogue delivered in mumbled Scouse. Still, as first goes, go, not bad.

Only a few days ago, I was railing against the current fad for over-long documentaries. Well, do

you know something? I haven't changed my mind at all. For an hour *True Stories: Edge of Madness* (Channel 4) had been a top-flight documentary — combining a straightforward, matter-of-fact explanation of schizophrenia with the moving and distressing true accounts of the title. Sadly, however, there was half an hour of psycho-babble and therapy-speak still to come.

The last word should have belonged to Barrie's marvellous mum who argued most eloquently for a rethink of Government policy on care for the mentally ill, based on her experience with her now adult son. "You have to live with the illness 24 hours a day, year in and year out — then you can say you understand it. If they want community care to work, this Government needs people like me." I didn't doubt it for a minute.

• Lynne Truss is on holiday

## REVIEW

### CHOICE

#### Survival Special: A Space in the Heart of Africa

ITV, 8.00pm

This extraordinary wildlife film, narrated by Ian Holm, has "award-winning" written all over it. Penetrating deep into the heart of the rainforests of Zaire, Alan Root and his team came back with footage capturing some of the most elusive and rarest of Africa's animals. The spaces alluded to in the title are the clearings in the dense vegetation created and maintained by the forest elephants. A delicate balance of animals and weather ensures a habitat in which a multitude of wildlife thrives. Among Root's stunning achievement were the first sightings by a naturalist of the fishing gery, a species whose existence was only established in the 1930s. He also sights Africa's rarest bird, the Congo peacock.

**The Dynasty** BBC2, 7.30pm

Abida Hussain is no soap opera invention. She is the matriarch of one of the 500 or so feudal families who have dominated the political system of Pakistan since partition in 1947. These families derive their influence and status from a potent mix of economics and religion. Both Abida and her husband (and cousin) Fakher Imam are politicians and large landowners who dispense justice and charity to their peasants like benevolent despots. They are also Shia Muslims, direct descendants of Mohammed, and regarded as living saints. But, as this three-part series demonstrates, the old order is under threat. The peasants are fed up and the younger members of the family unwilling to follow tradition. We are Abida's guests as she shows us her domain, but like any observant visitors, we see more than perhaps we were meant to.

**Inside Story: Miracle Babies** BBC1, 9.30pm

With today's fertility treatments, multiple births are a fairly common occurrence. In the depression years of the 1930s, such an event was viewed as little less than a miracle. The *Dionne* girl quintuplets were born to a poor farming couple in the depths of rural Canada. The attending doctor, Allan Deane, immediately took over their care. The public flocked in their millions to watch the girls, who were paraded for their amusement. The centre of a multi-million dollar industry, they grew up little better than circus freaks, with Ben, his best friend in Les, a white boy interview together, the three remaining sisters tell their stories. Hesitant, reserved and awkward, they blame no one and wish for nothing. Just ten million of the \$300 million the Ontario government made out of them. Not much to ask, considering.

**Double Exposure: Seed** BBC2, 11.15pm

Tonight's dolly of drama from writers new to television is a story stuffed with biblical allegories and metaphors. It pivots around a make-or-buy for three young friends of differing racial backgrounds in Birmingham. Written by Bradley Cole, the tale is both a rite-of-passage story and a look at the choices facing today's youth. Ben is a third-generation West Indian who has to decide between a dead-end job or returning to Jamaica and a better life. His Asian girlfriend Hashi must choose between marrying as her family wishes or staying with Ben. His best friend in Les, a white boy with a history of violence who dreams of leaving his estranged baby something wonderful — a field hacked out of the wasteland. Together they sow the seed, but which of these three seeds will flourish and which will fail?

Frances Lase

## HTV

### 6.00pm GMTV (1179569)

9.25 *Halfway Across the Galaxy* and *Turn Left* (Teletext) (s) (0411366) 9.50 *Hope and Glory* (0400964)

10.20 *News headlines* (0386602)

10.25 *HTV News* (Teletext) (0385873)

10.30 *FILM: Laila* (1989) Musical drama with Tina Turner and Eric Grant. Directed Bruce Seth Green (0894231)

12.20pm *HTV News* (2118163)

12.30 *News* (Teletext) and weather (0622540)

12.55 *Shortland Street* (s) (0607231) 1.25 *Coronation Street* (s) (0510707)

2.25 *FILM: This Wife for Hire* (1985) with Pam Dawber and Robert Klein. Comedy about woman hiring herself out to perform domestic duties only. Part two can be seen tomorrow. Directed by James R. Drake (0770775)

3.20 *News* (0128724) 3.25 *HTV News* (0127095) 3.30 *Alphabet Castle* (0332892) 3.40 *Wizards* (1064618)

3.50 *Magic Adventures of Mumble* (0604873) 4.15 *Thiny Toon Adventures* (0609231) 4.40 *Are You Afraid of the Dark?* (2224472)

5.10 *NEW* *Great Western Women*. The campaigns on green issues (06271)

7.30 *Coronation Street*. Tricia draws a blank in her search for Terry's contact number and address (Teletext) (279)

8.00 *Survival Special: A Space in the Heart of Africa* (s) (0411366)

9.00 *Grass Roots*. The second part of a mini-series about a lawyer involved in an explosive murder trial. Concludes after the news (Teletext) (s) (5163)

10.00 *News* (Teletext) and weather (53347)

10.30 *HTV News* (Teletext) (752279)

10.40 *Grass Roots*. Concluded (Teletext) (s) (12281)

11.30 *FILM: Convicted* (1986) with Lindsay Wagner and John LaRocca. Tense drama based on a real case, about a man who was wrongly arrested and convicted of the rape of three women. Directed by David Lowell Rich (762321)

1.15 *God's Gift* (081330) 2.15 *Cyber Cafe* (73800) 2.45 *Dear Nick* (0158000) 3.50 *Bushell on the Box* (s) (02496748)

4.15 *Sound Bites* (0338944) 4.30 *The Time... the Place* (s) (78922) 5.00 *Cover Story* (s) (01125) 5.30 *News* (45105)

6.00 *Meridian Tonight* (415)

6.30 *Animal Country* (845)

7.00-7.30 *Wheel of Fortune* (8827)

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## HTV WALES

### As HTV WEST except:

6.25pm *Wales Tonight* (063279)

7.00-7.30 *Cafe Slagi* (3227)

## WESTCOUNTRY

### As HTV WEST except:

10.30am *FILM: A Little Romance* (06994231)

12.55pm *Coronation Street* (0607231)

1.25-1.55 *Cross Wits* (01450892)

1.55 *Home and Away* (0274963)

2.25 *Healthily by Nature* (01560163)

2.55-3.20 *A Country Practice* (7288568)

5.10-5.40 *Home and Away* (7488095)

6.00 *Westcountry Live* (06908)

7.00-7.30 *Wheel of Fortune* (8827)

## CENTRAL

### HTV WEST except:

10.30am *FILM: A Little Romance* (06994231)

12.55pm *Home and Away* (0607231)

1.25 *Cross Wits* (01450892)

1.55 *A Country Practice* (7287988)

2.25 *People's Verdict* (01501892)

2.50-3.20 *Women Talking* (0306366)

5.10-5.40 *Shortland Street* (7488095)

6.25 *Central News and Weather* (063279)

7.00-7.30 *Wheel of Fortune* (8827)

11.30 *Phoenix* (338453)

12.55pm *Bushell on the Box* (0318767)

1.05 *God's Gift* (0281090)

2.10 *Dear Nick* (2566651)

3.05 *In Focus* (0914554)

3.50 *Jobfinder* (5388900)

## MEDIAN

### As HTV WEST except:

9.50-10.20 *Sandokan* (7900960)

10.30 *Worzel Gummidge Down Under* (01366)

11.00 *Dogland and the Three Musketeers* (0377696)

11.25 *Go Getters* (0771453)

11.55 *Dungeons and Dragons* (2558892)

12.55pm *Coronation Street* (0607231)

1.25 *Home and Away* (01450892)

1.55 *Shortland Street* (7488095)

2.20 *The Miles Touch* (01501892)

2.50-3.20 *Serve Up Right* (0306366)

5.10 *Home and Away* (7488095)

6.00 *Meridian Tonight* (415)

6.30 *Animal Country* (845)

7.00-7.30 *Wheel of Fortune* (8827)

## CHANNEL 4

### 6.35am Sharky and George (s) (0249296)

7.00 *The Big Breakfast* (03163)

9.00 *California Dreams* (s) (0420873) 9.25 *The Secret World of Alex Mack* (s) (0423901) 9.55 *Saved by the Bell: The College Years* (s) (0330776)

10.20 *Pink Panther* (s) (05213502)

10.45 *Rocko's Modern Life* (s) (04562144) 11.05 *Crystal Maze* (s) (Teletext) (s) (03058188) 12.00 *Home to House* (03950) 12.30pm *Lone Planet* (71231) 1.00 *Sesame Street* (s) (077676) 2.00 *Desperately Seeking Something* (01505618)

2.25 *FILM: Let George Do It* (01490, b/w) with George Formby as an entertainer who mistakenly ends up in pre-invasion Norway during the Second World War. Directed by Marcel Varnel (028434)

4.00 *Backdate* (Teletext) (s) (008) 4.30 *Countdown* (Teletext) (s) (092) 5.00 *Ricki Lake* (Teletext) (s) (0561540) 5.45 *Terraviva* (0253298)

6.00 *Party of Five*. Charlie and Kirsten are shocked when his former girlfriend claims he's three-year-old child is his (Teletext) (s) (415434)

6.50 *Terraviva* (0253298) 7.00 *Channel 4 News* (172537) 7.45 *The Bill* (067262)

8.00 *Brookside*. Mick, forced out of the Novices competition with an injury, turns his attention to Lou (Teletext) (s) (2989)

8.30 *Absolutely Animals*. The last in the magazine series. When Lucy Cooper was issued with a noise abatement notice, she was advised that if she could not silence her dog, she should have its voicebox removed (Teletext) (s) (4724)

9.00 *Ellen*. Ellen decides to drop everything and explore America (Teletext) (s) (5434)

9.30 *Dressing for Breakfast*. Louise picks up courage and sells her jewellery as a special act (Teletext) (s) (01055)

10.00 *American Gothic*. Dr Matt Crowther gets the chance to relieve the night of the fatal accident (Teletext) (s) (6892)

11.00 *The Naked Truth*. American all-com with Tea Loni as a tabloid newspaper photographer (Teletext) (s) (7279)

11.30 *Cheers*. Sam acts as peacemaker for Carla (s) (42328)

12.00 *Century of Cinema: The Night of the Film-Makers*. The director Edgar Reitz discusses German cinema with actors and directors (Teletext) (7475854)

1.05 *FILM: The Neasy Girl* (1989, colour and b/w). Michael Verhoeven's award-winning fact-based satire with Lena Stolze in German with English subtitles (778125)

2.45am *Exodus*. A diary of the Lutan anchortube Exodus, and their war against the Criminal Justice Bill (s) (7145552)

3.20 *Zombie Town*. A glimpse of life in a city under siege in Serbia (s) (03921351) Ends at 3.50

6.00 *Party of Five*. Charlie and Kirsten are shocked when his former girlfriend claims he's three-year-old child is his (Teletext) (s) (415434)

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## FOOTBALL 40

United enter talks with Barcelona to sign Cruyff

# SPORT

WEDNESDAY JULY 24 1996

## TENNIS 46

Yorkshire stalwart answers call to county arms



Late equaliser keeps alive hopes of place in Olympic semi-finals

## Britain draw on Giles's expertise

Holland ..... 2  
Great Britain ..... 2

FROM DAVID MILLER  
IN ATLANTA

THE strange laws of hockey and a video camera helped to produce a sizzling match between Holland, the favourites in Pool B, and Great Britain in the Olympic Games men's hockey competition yesterday. A draw, snatched by Calum Giles, the penalty corner specialist, five minutes from the finish, earned Britain an invaluable point.

On a morning at Clark



Games chaos ..... 11  
Gymnastic mastery ..... 42  
Results ..... 43  
Atlanta guide ..... 44

University, during which players lost up to 816 in temperatures that reached the 90s, the play equalled the frying-pan conditions. Britain were outplayed for the opening 20 minutes and much of the last 20, yet steady nerves, the superb judgment of Mason in goal, Wyatt at the heart of defence and Soma Singh in midfield, plus the summary execution of Giles, leaves Britain with all to play for in their bid to reach the semi-finals.

It is bizarre that Britain have been able, controversially but legally, to exploit the rolling-substitute law, introduced last year, to utilise Giles as a 30-second striker. His goal was his 38th in 51 matches, the value apparent from the fact that Britain have yet to score in open play.



Thompson, right, of Great Britain, is shadowed by Brinkman, the Holland defender, during their Pool B match yesterday. Photograph: Gary M Prior/Allsport

Roelant Oltmans, the Holland coach, had no complaints. "It's part of the rules, and as long as they're there, it's a good idea," he said. "Personally, I'd throw the rule out straightaway." He thought Britain were negative, working on defensive strategies.

No less extraordinary, however, than this regulation is a law that persecutes a player for inadvertently getting his head in the way of an 80mph penalty-corner shot, allowing

the opposition a penalty stroke. That was Singh's fate when, 11 minutes from time, he deflected van den Honert's penalty-corner scoop, which left him lying on the ground. The wily veteran, Delissen, beat Mason from the penalty flick. To rescue a point from that setback was particularly satisfying for the British.

"We were looking for two points from two games," David Whittle, the team manager, said, "so we're pleased to be on target after drawing 2-2 against South Korea. No, I don't think we're a defensive team. We're in the process of building for a big tournament, not hanging ourselves early. Holland are one of the most

potent teams in the world. We knew the pool would be a dog-fight."

Giles has a rare facility to flick the ball harder than many can hit it. Britain exploit his skill in varying power and direction to keep themselves among the world's leading nations in the absence of a front-rank striker. Giles is advised by Jon Copp, the head coach, sitting beside him on the bench, where to aim each time he dashes onto the field.

Copp is receiving information from a video camera situated on the other side of the field, and yesterday reviewed his decision on Giles's aim from evidence of the Dutch formation as they

rushed from the goalline at a previous penalty corner. Giles unerringly placed the ball high in the top right hand of Jansen's net. Four minutes before half-time, Jansen had saved brilliantly from Giles's previous effort.

Even at nine in the morning, the sun was intimidating. From the start, de Noijer, on the left of Holland's attack, threatened England's defence with his pace and dextrous dribbling. Britain responded with runs by Nicky Thompson, while Takher hit a post from the fringe of the circle after 11 minutes.

Holland went ahead from a penalty corner six minutes later, Bovelander, their former

defender now switched to midfield, sweeping home Brinkman's ball from the line. Moments later, Delissen should have scored, but skidded the ball over the top.

Eight minutes before half-time, Lee, who had come on as a substitute for Hall, had his stick taken in the circle by Jazet. Holland's central defender, a penalty stroke was awarded, and Jansen received a green card for protesting. Garcia made simple the task of flicking the ball past the bulky goalkeeper.

Holland pressed early in the second half, Mason again saving a penalty corner from Bovelander. In the unrelenting heat, the score remained

level until Singh's misfortune. Van den Honert's shot struck his head, rebounded off the right-hand post on to the left, came out, and was put in the net by van den Honert, but the umpire already had his arm raised for a foul, the Dutch protesting that the goal should be allowed. Just when it seemed that Delissen's penalty stroke had ended Britain's hopes, up sprang Giles from the substitutes' bench.

HOLLAND: R Jansen, L K Gielink, E Jazet, W van Pelt, M Delissen, J Brinkman, S Veen, F J Bovelander, J Deinum, T de Noijer, T van den Honert.  
GREAT BRITAIN: S Mason, J Wyatt, J Helle, S Singh, J Lissett, K Takher, N Thompson, C Myer, P McGuire, R Garcia, D Hall, Substitutes: Jazet, S Hallett, J Lee, J Shaw, C Giles.  
Umpires: L Morales (Spain) and R Weller (Germany).

## Legalities disrupt England's planning for Lord's

BY ALAN LEE  
CRICKET CORRESPONDENT

A RARE mix of legal, medical and meteorological considerations is confusing England's preparation for the first Test match against Pakistan at Lord's. Much the most alarming prospect is that the game could begin tomorrow with Michael Atherton, the captain, detained in the witness box at the High Court where, ironically, he would be giving evidence on behalf of a former captain of Pakistan.

Atherton, who has been subpoenaed by Imran Khan in the libel case brought by Ian Botham and Allan Lamb, spent yesterday morning at the court without being called and must now report back today, when he has been assured his evidence will be heard as a matter of priority. At best, this will undermine England's final practice session.

Speed test ..... 46

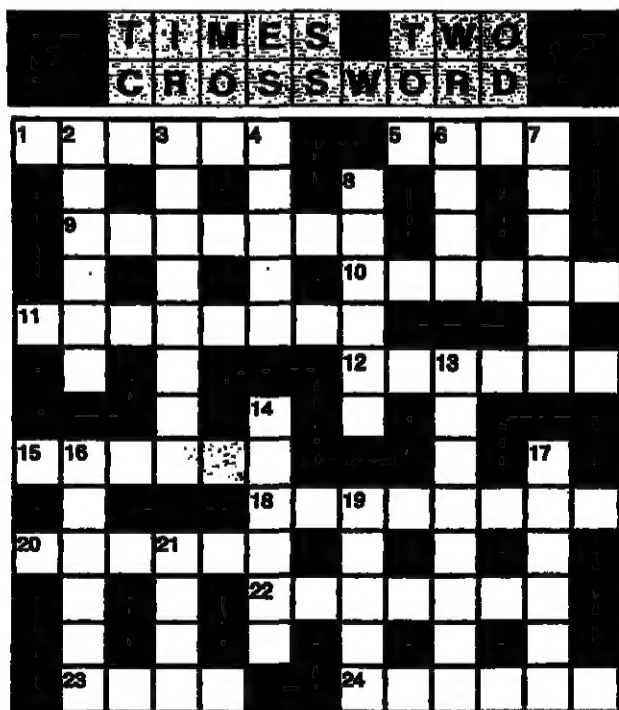
sion. At worst, it could disrupt the match itself.

This unprecedented situation was plainly irritating Atherton yesterday but he is helpless to resolve it. The England coach, David Lloyd, is another of Imran's witnesses in a case providing a wholly unwelcome distraction.

Nasser Hussain, however, had other matters on his mind yesterday as he gingerly tested his broken right index finger in the nets at Lord's. It did not go well and if the game was beginning today, Hussain would not be playing.

"Driving through the gates today I felt I would definitely be all right," he said. "It's OK when the ball hits the middle of the bat but painful when it hits anywhere else." He realises his chances are slim. "I want to give it another go because I'm not going to give up my place without a fight. I spent two years wondering if I would get another chance in the side and it would be heartbreaking to have to miss a Lord's Test."

The altered weather conditions could have a bearing on the composition of the attack. Yesterday's practice was interrupted several times by thunder showers and if the weather remains humid, the chances of Simon Brown making his Test debut will greatly increase.



No 842

### ACROSS

- 1 Small place for storm (6)
- 5 Voucher; (little) girl (4)
- 9 Race-track double-bend (7)
- 10 Yellow pigment; egg car-bumper coating (6)
- 11 If there is no alternative (2,1,5)
- 12 Conclusion (6)
- 15 Verse of poem (6)
- 18 Absolutely naked (8)
- 20 TV hoax-victim trophy (6)
- 22 Displayed (for inspection) (4,3)
- 23 Indication (4)
- 24 Specialist (6)

### DOWN

- 2 Arouse (6)
- 3 "This day is called the feast of —" (Henry V) (8)
- 4 Obvious; low, flat ground (5)
- 6 Period of time; type of glass (4)
- 7 Tracy — Pickwick Club member (6)
- 8 Promiscuous man (6)
- 13 1933 Marx Brothers film (4,4)
- 14 Dark volcanic rock (6)
- 16 Doubting apostle (6)
- 17 Meteorite pit (6)
- 19 Wonderland girl (5)
- 21 Rugged peak (4)

SOLUTION TO No. 841  
ACROSS: 1 Dossier 4 Sordid 8 Play 9 Forceful 10 Take issue 13 Scale 15 Train 16 Forte 18 Ring a bell 21 Congreve 22 Wing 23 Sleuth 24 Digest

DOWN: 1 Deputy 2 Sparkler 3 Rufus 5 Orchestra 6 Doff 7 Deluge 11 Interpreter 12 Swain 14 Appetite 16 Prizes 17 Slight 20 Anne

SOLUTION TO TIMES TWO CROSSWORD 837  
In association with BRITISH MIDLAND

ACROSS: 6 Trapene 7 Lucie 9 Relic 10 Astound 11 Chill factor 14 Let off steam 17 Stretch 19 Defoe 21 Ascot 22 Muzzin

DOWN: 1 Caul 2 Kerchief 3 Recall 4 Blot 5 Accustom 6 Term 8 Endure 11 Cut-price 12 Aberdeen 13 Alaska 15 Scheme 16 Mean 18 Tate 20 Faze

1st PRIZE of a return ticket travelling economy class to anywhere on BRITISH MIDLAND's domestic or international network is B Henry, Ballymoney, Co Antrim.  
2nd PRIZE of a return ticket to anywhere on BRITISH MIDLAND's domestic network is Mrs Pearce, East Grinstead, Sussex.  
All flights subject to availability.

## Golden girl Smith tries to laugh off drug slurs

Craig Lord on the rapid improvement of Ireland's double Olympic champion

M ichelle Smith, with two gold medals in the bag, threw back her flaxen locks in laughter, her emerald eyes shining with mirth, her defence ready. The question was: What did she think about whispers around the Georgia Tech pool that her phenomenal progress might be down to drugs?

"I find that really funny," she said. "My ultimate answer is that you've just got to look at the fact that I'm the most tested Irish athlete around. I think for every test that the American swimmers have, I have about five. Fina [swimming's governing body] drug testers, well, they know my name by heart and I can almost tell you what they have in their coffee at this stage."

Speculation surrounding Smith has its roots not only in her improvement from average to outstanding in international waters at 26, but the presence of Erik de Bruin, the suspended Dutch discus thrower, whom she married last month.

De Bruin is to Smith what Henry Higgins was to Eliza Doolittle, transforming the swimmer both physically and mentally after becoming her coach in 1993. The two formed a relationship at the 1992 Barcelona Olympics and De Bruin has "applied the techniques of track and field" to Smith's aquatic programme.

Commenting on her progress, Smith said: "I think it's a combination of things. I have great support from my husband and my coach, who sets my training regime and has turned around my mental attitude."

"I've totally changed my regime these past 3½ years. I did the typical long-distance swimming programme for so

many years. When my husband took over my coaching, he said the way I trained was the way they trained on the track 15 years ago. I used to just swim long distance all the time — I swam and I swam and swam. My husband's idea was that if you go out faster over the first 100 or 200 metres by improving your sprint times, even if your endurance stays the same, then you're automatically going to be faster. So we started doing more sprint and strength work while retaining some of the endurance elements."

Smith acknowledges her physical change, explaining that she took up weight training for the first time at 23. "I gained a lot of strength and put it into my swimming stroke and for someone of my height — I'm only 5ft 3in — I've got a really long stroke and can pull a lot of water."

As for her age, she notes that "a lot of swimmers are realising that they can continue longer and not only swim at the top but swim faster than they did when younger". She cites Janet Evans, 25, though fails to say that the American swam her best times when 17 and 18 years old in the late eighties and has never come close since.

Smith is unperturbed by the speculation. "No, it doesn't make me angry. Nothing can spoil my joy and my happiness now I've got two medals. These past three years, I've given up everything. I quit university and came back from the States [US] because I really wasn't achieving what I knew I could. Everything's been put aside for this."

She is now being billed as a possible winner of four gold medals, with the 200m medley today and the 200m butterfly on Friday. Smith says that those expectations are a "tall order" but not impossible.

Helping to drive her to heights she had only dreamed of before is her Irish patriotism. "I went to an All-Irish speaking school [Colaiste Chillaif in Dublin] and that gave me a great love of the language, the culture and the history and the heritage. It all comes together when you see that flag going up there on the podium," she said.

Her parents' home in Rathcoole is a shrine to Smith. "There are pictures and medals covering every wall all over the house," she said.



Smith: great support

## Judgment serves Henman's cause

TIM HENMAN took the first step towards an Olympic tennis medal yesterday, but only after receiving a helping hand from a line judge. The British No 1 was set point down at 5-6 against Shuzo Matsuoka, of Japan, when his second service appeared to land wide of the service box.

The linesman agreed but then immediately corrected himself, giving Henman another first service. Henman took full advantage by holding on to force a tie-break which he took 7-4, completing the set with an excellent forehand down the line.

Henman, the world No 37, who made far too many errors in the opening set, gained in confidence as the Japanese, ranked No 83, effectively threw in the towel.

The 21-year-old from Oxford won the first 11 points of the second set and although Matsuoka did regather his thoughts, it was too late. Henman dropped just four points on his serve in the second set before winning the match 7-6, 6-3, in 1hr 22min, with a forehand that landed precisely on the sideline.

Marc Rosset, of Switzerland, the defending champion, swept aside Hicham Arazi, of Morocco, 6-2, 6-3 in the opening match on centre court match. Rosset, the No 8 seed, won five consecutive games in the first set to take command against Arazi, ranked eighth in the world.

Arantxa Sanchez Vicario, winner of a bronze medal at Barcelona and No 3 seed in the women's draw, took the final three games to beat Dominique Van Roost, of Belgium, 6-1, 7-5.

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RAE

STAR IS BORN  
STRAND  
AND  
NARR

How technology has revolutionised competitive yacht racing and Cowes Week  
PAGE 5

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